HISTORICAL RESOURCES INVENTORY
CITY OF BELMONT, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 1991

This report was prepared by the San Mateo County Historical Association and the San Mateo County Historical Resource Advisory Board under contract to the City of Belmont. Kent L. Seavey served as primary author and consultant to the Historcal Association. Karl Mittelstadt served as the city project supervisor. Members of the following organizations acted as field volunteers in collecting data for the survey and as researchers once individual resources were identified. The Belmont Historical Society, San Carlos Branch of the American Association of University Women and the San Carlos Villagers. Their assistance as well as that of volunteers from the general public was instrumental in the successful completion of this study.
The front and back cover photographs of Ralston Hall and 1801 Belburn Drive were taken by volunteer Kenneth Ashford.

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INTRODUCTION

The Belmont Historical Resource Inventory was a joint project between the City of Belmont and the San Mateo County Historical Association. The project expands upon Belmont's 1974 Resolution No. 4154 designating buildings having historic or aesthetic value. Its purpose is to create a citywide survey of cultural resources in order to include them in the comprehensive community planning process. It is necessary to consider the significance and value of these irreplacable historic assets if continuity is to be maintained between a rich cultural heritage and future development within the city. It is important to preserve a part of the past environment. It is also important in the design and construction of new development to achieve a visual and aesthetic compatibility between the old and the new. Inclusion on this survey, once adopted by the city, allows the property-owner to utilize the less-stringent California Historic Building Code when rehabilitating or expanding a surveyed historic structure, and allows use of federal investment tax credits for applicable projects.

The survey is not intended to be an end, but rather a beginning for a possible city historical/architectural preservation program. Project budget constraints limited the number of surveyed properties included. There are a number of resources which deserve to be listed and protected. As further research is conducted on these cultural assets additional structures and sites should be added to the official listing.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BELMONT

The following is not intended to be a scholarly history of the development of the City of Belmont but rather a contextual outline through which major patterns of growth can be more clearly understood. The majority of the material has been extracted from existing publications and sources available at the San Mateo County Historical Association, and other local libraries. Additional references are cited in the bibliography.

Belmont to 1850

In general the Indians of California, and more specifically of the San Francisco peninsula, were hunters and gatherers with partial dependence on the natural acorn crop. Because they had no written language we know them mostly through the record of Spanish contact and archaeological reference. Those living along the central coast between San Francisco and Monterey county's Big Sur region were collectively called Coastanos or coastal people by the Spainiards. Modern anthropologists more correctly refer to these early Californians as the Ohlones.

There were about 1,500 Native Americans in the San Mateo County area at the time of European contact dispersed around the peninsula in small subgroups of up to 200 members. The natural east-west corridor of the Canada del Diablo (roughly the route of today's Ralston Ave.) may have been the geographic boundry between two such subgroups, the Salson to the north of Belmont Creek and Lhamshin to the south in the San Carlos area. At least one seasonal village of the Salson is known to have existed in what is today Belmont. A specific product of European contact with the native population was its rapid dispersal among the mission settlements and gradual disappearance as a cultural entity.

Spanish colonization of the San Francisco peninsula took the form of exploration followed by occupation. A reconnaisance party from the Portola Expedition of 1769 stumbled upon San Francisco Bay after missing their initial objective, the port of Monterey. Subsequent exploration and mapping of the region by provincial government officials in1774 preceeded the establishment of the Presidio of San Francisco and the Mission San Francisco de Asis in 1776. By the 1790's the San Francisco establishments were being

supported by small farming dependencies as far south as San Mateo. As early as1795 a few provisional grants of land were being made to settlers and retired soldiers as well as men of influence in the province.

One such individual was Don Jose Dario Arguello, commandante of the presidios at San Francisco (1787-91, 1796-1806) and Monterey (1791-96). Don Jose served as Governor of Alta California in 1814-15. During his tenure as Commandante at Monterey Governor Diego de Borcia purports to have awarded Arguello what was to become the Las Pulgas Rancho, a 35,000 acre grant that included within its boundries the future communities of Belmont, Atherton, Menlo Park, Redwood City, San Carlos and part of San Mateo. In 1835 Don Jose Arguello's heirs were confirmed in the ownership of El Rancho de las Pulgas with a deeded grant issued by then Governor, Don Jose Castro. The Arguello adobe and ranch headquarters were located in today's San Carlos. However, the Canada del Diablo remained a principal access route from El Camino Real on the bayside to the San Andreas and San Raymundo valleys and the coast.

The War with Mexico, (1846-48) saw the transfer of California from Mexican rule to control by the United States. While the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which ended the conflict guaranteed the rights of continued ownership of property to the former citizens of Mexico a Land Commission was soon formed by the new government to test the Spanish and Mexican land grant titles. Among those reviewed was the Rancho de las Pulgas. In 1852 Dona Maria de la Soledad Ortega y Arguello, chief heir to the rancho hired attorney Simon Mezes of the San Francisco law firm of Ranke, Cipriani and Mezes to settle the issue. This he successfully did securing 35,240 acres by letters patent from the Supreme Court of the United States in 1854. For his services Mezes received 15% of the las Pulgas landholdings including what would later become the town of Belmont.

1850-1864

In September of 1850 California became the thirty-first state in the Union. In December of that year hosteler Charles A. Angelo opened a roadhouse at the junction of the Canada del Diablo and the San Francisco-San Jose Road, in part to service the San Francisco to San Jose Stage line. The embryonic village that began to form around this crossroads went through a succession of names before it settled on Belmont, which may have been the invention of San Francisco land speculators. They promoted the Pulgas Ranch properties of S. M. Mezes as the town's first "subdivision" in the fall and winter of1853. Thus at a very early date the American grid system of town planning superceeded, in part the more casual boundry markings of the

Spanish-Mexican era. Among the numbered north/south streets Fifth and Sixth Avenues still remain as do E and F streets from the alphabetical east/west arteries. These, with the trace of Old County Road and Ralston Avenue, are among the few physical reminders of the beginnings of a townsite in the 1850's.

Simon Mezes made his home in Belmont as did several acquaintences who established country houses in the area. The pioneer population consisted of farmers, dairymen, merchants and landed gentry. Former governor John McDougal bought property south of Ralston Avenue in1854. McDougal was instrumental in Belmont's becoming San Mateo's first county seat in1856. The villages elevation to the seat of county government however short lived probably induced Adam Castor to establish the first general merchandice store at the "Corners" in 1857. Included among the gentry was Col. Leonetto Cipriani, one of the early and influential Italians to enter the state. Cipriani's chateau and grounds formed the nucleus of what would become San Francisco financier William Ralston's palatial estate "Belmont". these large country homes would characterize the areas general land use from the mid 1860's to the turn of the century.

It was in1864 that Ralston purchased his Belmont property and began an era of construction on his estate that would continue until his untimely death in1875. Architects of national stature including William Henry Cleveland and John P. Gaynor were involved over time with the constantly evolving mansion and its dependencies. Hundreds of craftsmen were employed on the project. Some of them, including Robert P. Mills, the glazing contractor for Ralston's home and the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, settled permanantly in the area to be closer to the job site. Ralston's estate was ment to be self sufficient and contained among other technological innovations its own natural gas plant which supplied lighting for the hundreds of chandeliers. "Belmont" had its own reservoir, constructed about 1870 in the Canada del Diablo. It is now a city park known as Water Dog Lake.

Wiliam Ralston's "Belmont" is the community's pre-eminent historic resource. It represents a series of major land use changes that characterized the city's growth over time. These include its role as a private estate by Ralston,and later by his partner William Sharon. In1895 it became a private school called Radcliffe Hall or the Radcliffe School for Girls. In1901 Dr. A.M. Gardner purchased the property and established it as a sanitarium for the treatment of nervous disorders. A Catholic teaching order, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur bought the estate in1922 and a year later opened it as the College of Notre Dame, in which capacity it still functions. Ralston Hall,

the former residence, and the stone carriage house have been designated National Historic Landmarks. Both are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are California State Landmarks as well. Other physical evidence of the Ralston presence is still around. A small Gothic style cottage that served as the gas plant operators residence in the1870's has been moved to1602 Francis Ave. and rehabilitated. The original location of the house can be seen on Map #1, attached.

William Ralston's appearance in Belmont in 1864 coincided with the completion of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad. The railroad opened a new era in transportation access to the area. Prior to this time the only avenue to San Francisco markets was by wagon road or from Capt. Owen O'Neill's boat landing on the bay. Local citizen and real estate speculator Augustus P. Molitor lost no time in recording a subdivision map for the layout of town lots around the crossroads to take advantage of anticipated development.The village's first bond issue, for a new schoolhouse was passed in April of that year. Molitor's hoped for building boom never materialized. In fact it would be 1867 before a railroad station would be erected at Belmont.Instead the village experienced a gradual expansion around the "Corners", a service support center for the large estates, smaller farmsteads and the few residents of San Carlos.

1865-1894

While limited permanent growth occured in Belmont with the arrival of the railroad, transient occupancy skyrocketed. This was due to the entrepreneurial skills of local merchant Carl Augustus Janke who opened his Belmont Park in 1865 on some of the property formerly owned by Governor McDougal. Modeled after traditional German beer gardens Janke's enterprise was a working class equivilant of Ralston's "Belmont". Its dance pavilion held 300 and the grounds afforded a variety of recreational opportunities for young and old alike.

During the height of its popularity picnics were scheduled on wednesdays, saturdays and sundays. It was a particular favorite of ethnic, fraternal and social groups from San Francisco who traveled by rail or took bay steamers to get to the park. In 1876 the International Order of Odd Fellows rented seventy-five railroad cars to bring seven thousand of their members to the recreational facility. That same year the Janke family opened Belmont's first industry, the making and bottling of soft drinks. Belmont Park's success continued to the end of the century when the railroad established a policy refusing picnic charters. Damage to company

property and the enmity of regular commuters, some of them influential Southern Pacific stockholders heralded the parks demise.

In the early 1900's the parksite was broken up for other uses. George L. Center, a San Francisco banker built the first reinforced concrete dwelling in Belmont on part of the old Janke property. The bankers experience in the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 prompted the use of this new building material. The house, designed in the fashionable Mission Revival style still remains as the best example of this architectural form in Belmont. The size and solidity of the Center house lent itself to use as one of the communities sanitaria after the owners death in 1923. It opened as the Twin Pines Sanitarium in 1925 and operated under that name until 1972.

In 1973 the citizens of Belmont recognizing both the historic and recreational value of the property passed a bond act to purchase much of it for city park use. While the name Twin Pines is appropriate to a specific period of the park's history renaming the property Belmont Park and listing it as a California Point of Historical Interest would more properly identify this city landmark in the context of its most important historic use.

The "Corners" commercial expansion was generally south along the San Francisco-San Jose Road which later became Old County Road. In 1876 the Episcopal Church in San Mateo County constructed a "Redwood Gothic" mission establishment called Church of the Good Shepherd in this area, since removed to Fifth Avenue and designated a California Point of Historic interest. The key business houses around the crossroads included Waltermire's Belmont Hotel and bar, Rowell's American House, Hammerson's Blacksmith shop, and the Emmett General Store. Of these only the Emmett property remains as a recognizable entity from this earlier era.

Walter A. Emmett was a leading merchant in Belmont for more than thirty years. The Emmett Store at 700 Ralston Ave. was constructed in 1903, expanding a business that he had established on the site in1880 with Matthew O'Neill. The Emmett family home also remains intact just a block away at 843 Ralston Avenue. These two buildings constitute the remaining physical evidence of the town's commercial core in the last half of the nineteenth century.

An important early industry was the development of commercial oyster beds along Bemont's bay front. John S. Morgan was the driving force behind this enterprise from the1870's to the1890's, supplying the San Francisco market with up to 80,000 oysters a week. He built a series of watch houses on pilings at the margin of the bay to protect his beds from

oyster pirates. Two of these were in Belmont. He maintained his company headquarters in one and constructed a small cannery in town in1893. His was probably the first telephone to be installed when the San Carlos - Belmont Exchange was established in1894. 1893 was the year that electric lighting and concrete sidewalks first appeared at the "Corners". Sadly little tangible evidence remains of the once thriving oyster industry that was forced out of existance soon after the turn of the century due in part to increasing pollution in San Francisco Bay.

Ironically some of the pollution that precipitated the decline of the oyster industry came from Belmont itself. Its source was a major sewer system installed along Ralston Ave. from the Alameda de las Pulgas to the tidewater. The system was part of an1891 expansion program at the Belmont School for Boys. Local citizens could hook into the line for a fee. The school itself was the first of a group of exclusive prep schools that characterized part of the areas development into the early twentieth century.

William T. Reid, a former president of the University of California established the educational institution in 1885 on a portion of the old Ralston estate. By 1889 the campus with its upper and lower schools covered twenty-nine acres of what today is the Carlmont Shopping Center. Of particular interest is the fact that the Belmont School for Boys was the first American educational facility to be used by upper class Japanese nationals to introduce their young to Western culture and science. Reid operated the school successfully until his retirement in 1918 when the facility was sold to the Catholic Archbishop of San Francisco and became a parochial school. After1932 the Sisters of Mercy operated the school as St. Joseph's Military Academy.

The beautiful St. Michael's Hall of 1920 with its sympathetic combining of the Mission Revival and Craftsman styles of architecture is a landmark reminder of the property's historic significance. So is the Redwood mounted bronze bell at the front of the property at 1068 Alameda de las Pulgas. This simple artifact with its inscription and date, "Aunt Hattie 1910" honored Harriet Reid, the headmaster's sister-in-law who was a favorite among the students.

1895-1922

By the end of the century Belmont was a small well established settlement. It had a healthy commercial core around the "Corners" with a working class residential area adjacent to the east. Some of the wealthier

west side of the Old County Road toward San Mateo. The large estates off Canada del Diablo were being broken up but not for subdivision so much as for institutional use as private schools and sanitariums. The downtown had electricity, supplied by the San Mateo Electric Light Co., the telephone exchange was in place and there was a new sewer system. In 1896 the Council of Chosen Friends in Belmont was formed with its 35 members intent on the betterment of the small community. While Belmont Park was in decline the possibilities of the marshlands east of town were being explored by duck hunters and bathers and a small recreational shantytown began to emerge along the edge of San Francisco Bay.

As noted above, in 1895 Mrs. Jennie C. Bull purchased "Belmont" as a location for a private girls school to be called Radcliffe Hall. She hoped to make the institution "one of the educational centers of the state." Unfortunatly she did not live to see her wish materialize. In1900 her heirs sold the property to Dr. Alden M. Gardner, formerly on the staff of the Napa State Asylum. After extending and adding an additional floor to the original Cipriani wing of the mansion it was opened in1901 as the Gardner Nerve Sanitarium for the treatment of nervous disorders. This ushered in an era when Belmont would become known as a center for sanataria.

The bucolic setting of the Canada del Diablo was ideal for the care and treatment of convalescents as practiced in the early twentieth century. Patients could rest and regain their health in the invigorating natural environment in close proximity to an urban core. 1910 saw the purchase of the C. R. Spivalo estate adjoining the Reid School by Dr's Harry C. Warren and Max Rothchild. They developed the property as the California Sanitarium which specialized in the treatment of pulmonary diseases. In 1915 Mrs. Annette S. Alexander purchased about seven acres across Ralston Ave. from the Gardner Sanitarium and after a nine year investment in buildings and landscaping opened the Alexander Sanitarium in1924. Mrs. Maude C. Reed established the Nerve Rest Sanitarium in the former Hansen family home in 1918.

In 1924, Charles S. Howard, a wealthy San Francisco auto dealer established a foundation bearing his name and built a facility for the care and treatment of poor children near the California Sanitarium. The handsome pavillion constructed by L. Dioguardi for the foundation can still be seen at 2200 Carlmont Drive. This Belmont landmark is now used as the Merry Moppet pre-school. The last major treatment center to be opened was the Twin Pines Sanitarium housed in the landmark George L. Center home in what is now Twin Pines City Park. Dr. N.J. Gottbrath and two colleagues from San Francisco began operation of the facility in 1925.

Prior to the San Francisco Earhquake in 1906 the biggest event of the new century around the "Corners" was Walter Emmett's mini-building boom. In 1902 he had builder George Winter construct a saloon adjacent to the north end of his mercantile store. Then in1903 he hired contractor P.A. Roussel to replace the original store wth a new $5,000 building. Both are still standing. The saloon now consolidated into the store building. According to newspaper accounts of the time the earthquake itself left Belmont unscathed. A number of refugees from the disaster took refuge and eventually settled in many of the peninsula communities including Belmont. The local increase in population was not great however. The landmark George L. Center house and Havard home were a direct product of the earthquake, constructed in the immdiate aftermath of the seismic event.

1907 saw residential developers trying to take advantage of the unsettled times with the subdivision of "Belmont Terrace" southeast of the "Corners" along Old County Road. In spite of a 72% increase in San Mateo County's population between 1900 and 1910 Belmont remained a sleepy country village. In 1913 the *San Francisco Examiner* reported that real estate investor John R. Hillman and his Foothills Improvement Company had purchased a million dollars worth of Belmont property along the western side of the S.P. tracks including the George C. Ross estate, (a Belmont landmark at 1 Davey Glen Road) . The developers, according to the article "had invested a fortune giving Belmont an adequate water supply". However, the impetus for expansion would not come until the1920's. It would be in good part a product of the introduction of the automobile with its subsequent demand for improved roadways.

1912 saw the first paved highway in San Mateo County. The following year county voters approved a milion dollar bond issue matched by the state for road improvement. By1915 the Peninsula Rapid Transit Co. began regular bus service between San Francisco and Redwood City. In 1916 Pacific Auto Stage was giveing them competition. El Camino Real was paved through Belmont by 1919. One by-product of the improved highway system was a slow shifting of the towns center to the west, along El Camino. The late teens saw some of this movement in residential development along Waltermire St. and Sixth Avenue, much of which was owned by the Roussel family who were builders. Maps #2 and #3 attached, show the extent of this construction between 1913 and 1932. Fortunatly only a few physical changes have occured in this neighborhood over time. It contains excellent representitive examples of the Colonial Revival and Bungalow building styles popular in Belmont during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The late teens also saw the blossoming of a new industry, floriculture. Initiated around 1906 by Chinese and Japanese growers in the Belmont/San Carlos area it had developed into full scale production by 1915 when Japanese grower Sadakusu Enomoto shipped chrysanthemums across the continent to New Orleans. Because of Belmont's slow growth there was plenty of open land available on which to grow flowers. The Kariya Brothers were in Belmont as early as 1908 followed by the Mori Brothers in 1913 and the Higushi family in 1916. The Japanese used the flat bay lands east of El Camino along Ralston Ave. and off of Old County Road. The Chinese used the foothills west of El Camino. Neither nationality was allowed by law to purchase land so all the growing was done on rented property. During the 1920's and 30's Chinese like Moon Yee leased land at the Alexander Sanitarium, Sing Lom had his beds near Carlmont Drive. Tom Pennington, the city's first mayor and the Havard family rented land along South Road. The Lum family worked fields in the northwest portion of present day Belmont.

By the mid 1930's the Japanese began to dominate the industry. They had introduced lightly framed "cloth houses" covered with cheesecloth to protect the flowers as well as delay photo-synthesis extending the growing season. In1929 an extra siding was added at the Belmont train station to handle the flower shipments to San Francisco. After residential development finally hit Belmont the growers were forced out little by little as subdivisions replaced flower beds. As early as 1924 new homeowners were registering complaints about the smell of fertilizer and insects associated with cultivation. The Japanese left abruptly at the beginning of World War II, victims of Executive Order1066. After a brief stay at the Tanforan Racetrack they were relocated to Camp Topaz in Utah where many spent the remainder of the war.

The major development in Belmont in 1922 was the acquisition of the Gardner Sanitarium by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as the site for their College of Notre Dame. The college, established in 1868, was among the earliest to offer a baccalaureate degree in California, and was considered one of the finest educational institutions in the state. When enrollment grew to large for its existing facilities in San Jose the old Ralston estate was selected for the new campus. An adjoining parcel was purchased from the Foothills Development Company and San Francisco architect John Donovan was hired

to design new college buildings. A few artifacts from the San Jose campus can still be found on the grounds of Notre Dame including a fine Victorian gazebo dating to the 1870's. By 1923 the college was ready to receive its first class of 500 girls.

1923-1942

The three years between 1923 and 1926, when Belmont finally incorporated as a city of the sixth class were filled with promise for a bright future. Some of this promise materialized in the formation of a local sanitary district and volunteer fire department to assure an adequate level of basic services for the rapid residential growth the community was experiencing. However, some of the projected enterprises that fueld that growth and were active factors in the decision to become a city were never realized. One of the most intriguing was the re-emrgence of a proposal to annex peninsula cities to San Francisco in a borough system of government similar to New York City's. The scheme was put forward in 1923 by the Three Cities Chamber of Commerce, representing Burlingame, Hillsborough and San Mateo. It identified a line running between San Carlos and Belmont as the southern border of the proposed annexation. Under the system the S.F. Municipal Railway's electric car service would be extended to Belmont and a major port for would be established at San Mateo.

In 1925 the San Francisco Bay Terminals Co. initiated the multi-million dollar Port San Francisco project along Belmont's bayshore. It planned to provide deep-water docking space in three channels with a turning basin for sea-going vessels. Already becomming known as the "Chrysanthemum Center of America", success of the Port San Francisco project would have assured Belmont's emergence as a major center of commerce. Only the pilot channel was ever completed which is identified on modern maps as Belmont Channel.

San Carlos had preceeded Belmont in incorporating as a city by one year and was experiencing a major building boom. There was concern in the older settlement that annexation to its rapidly growing southern neighbor was a real possibility. These and other considerations including better local control over increasing residential growth were among the factors that determined the formation of a city government.

While a series of residential subdivisions were under construction in Belmont during the latter half of the1920's by far the most ambitious single development was Belle Monti Country Club Properties. Plans for the initial subdivision were recorded in 1924. By 1926 nine more tracts covering an

area of about one thousand acres of northwest Belmont had been filed by the developers. Employing successful sales techniques learned from the Los Angeles real estate market, the promoters promised their potential buyers a "circle of joy". They played off a theme of suburban leisure assured by ready transportation access and supported by high quality educational and recreational facilities. The purchase price of a lot between $300 to $1,000 included "all road work, water, electricity and telephone accomodations" and permanent membership in the country club.

The clubhouse at 751 Alameda de las Pulgas, was finished in 1925 as were the first nine holes of the promised golf course. A $10,000 swimming pool was included. Because of the sheer size of the development and problems with the newly formed Belmont Sanitary District the important infrastructure, roads, sewage and utility systems were less than promised. In the late 20's club membership was opened to the public in an effort to raise enough capital to pay off creditors. The Depression saw forclosure of the clubhouse. It would not be used again until WWII when it acted as an officers club for the military stationed in the area. Currently in use as the Congregational Church of Belmont, it is a designated city landmark. The original sales office, constructed in the form of a Medieval French grainery and listed as a Belmont historic resource stands at 790 Alameda de las Pulgas.

Belle Monti was projected architecturally by the investors as an English or French country estate. Again, because of the immense size of the tracts individual residences tended to be widely seperated so no stylistic continuity could be achieved, except in one instance. This was the Belburn Village Subdivision off Ralston Ave. that abutted the original golf course. Here in 1927-28 a number of one and two story residences were built in the Tudor Revival style of architecture. Enough of these beautifully designed period homes remain along Belburn Drive and Avon St. to constitute a historic district. Collectively they afford some idea of the ambitious vision of the Belle Monti builders.

The English and continental period forms were not the only building styles seen in Belmont during the boom of the1920's. The Spanish Eclectic or Mediterranean mode of design was very popular as well. One of the best example of the style can be found at 1556 Sixth Ave. in the Belmont Heights Subdivision. It was constructed in 1925 for Mr. Hienz (Hynes), manager for the Spring Valley Water Company's pumping station near the city line with San Carlos. Belmont Heights which developed much more cohesively than the Belle Monti tracts has an abundance of good Spanish Eclectic homes from the 20's and 1930's especially along the 1500 block of Sunnyslope. Historic

American building forms, while less popular than the period European styles do appear in limited numbers. Georgian, Dutch Gambrel and Federal residences can also be found in Belmont.

The coming of the Depression after1929 slowed growth in Belmont but did not stop it. In fact the population which was estimated at about 700 when the city incorporated in 1926 had grown to 1,200 by the outbreak of World War II. Because of her numerous educational and health facilities and a strong flower industry the new city was able to survive hard times in reasonable order. The Federal Works Progress Administration assisted in various municipal projects during this period including the construction of a new firehouse at 875 O'Neill St. in 1935-36. It was designed in the popular Spanish Eclectic style and remains a landmark building reflecting community commitment and spirit during times of trial.

The coming of World War II prefaced an excellerated period of growth in Belmont. It housed an Army antiaircraft camp and saw the beginnings of the electronics industry when firms including Dalmo Victor established research and production facilities east of El Camino. The city's population nearly tripled over the course of the conflict. Because of the transient nature of military occupation the only tangible reminders of the war remaining are the Belle Monti Country Clubhouse and Emmett's Store which served respectivley as an officers club and canteen for enlisted men.

On its surface today's Belmont seems far removed from the country crossroads settlement it was until the mid 1920's. But if one looks a little closer, past the wall-to-wall storefronts of El Camino and through the congested traffic arteries that once were wagon roads, the city's past can still be found. It is present in Walter Emmett's family home and store, marking the location of the old "Corners". Wm. Ralston's marvelous "Belmont" is still in place as part of the College of Notre Dame. Aunt Hattie's Bell along the Alameda reminds us of the contributions of the Reid School for Boys. Further north along Alameda the old sales kiosk and clubhouse mark the beginnings of the Belle Monti Country Club. Fine examples of period buildings, commercial, public and residential exhibit the changes in fashion over time that have given the city its character. There are not a lot of them, but enough to tell the city's story to the present and future generations if they can be preserved and protected as significant reminders of the community's history and growth.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY, EVALUATION CRITERIA, PROPERTY CATAGORIES, AND DEFINITIONS

METHODOLOGY

The Belmont Historic Resource Inventory was conducted by volunteer members of the San Carlos Branch of the American Association of University Women, the Belmont Historical Society, the San Carlos Villagers and interested individuals from both communities. Direction and supervision for the project came from the San Mateo County Historical Association which provided a preservation consultant/architectural historian as project coordinator to guide and oversee the inventory including preparation of the final report.

Special training sessions were conducted for the volunteers at Ralston Hall in Belmont in the fall and winter of 1990 through the courtesy of the College of Notre Dame. Three sessions delt with local history, architectural styles and the purpose and procedures for the inventory. Two final sessions had the volunteers in the field photographing and writing physical descriptions of potential cultural resources, then reviewing them with the project coordinator for accuracy and completeness. Each volunteer received a survey workbook with descriptions of contextual themes, useful definitions, historic dates associated with both Belmont and San Carlos, a selected bibliography, instructions for writing narrative sections on description and significance of identified properties, examples of good descriptions, sample inventory forms, brief descriptions of architectural styles found in both communities, a glossary of architectural terms, and a well documented preservation research guide to San Mateo County. Armed with this material and copies of Belmont parcel maps the volunteers were broken into teams of from two to four individuals to conduct a comprehensive windshield survey of the community.

The second phase of the project involved performing historical research for each identified property. This was conducted by the volunteers and project coordinator on an ongoing basis during the physical survey using a variety of available resources. A difficulty in researching Belmont was the lack of specific street addresses in any of the pre World War II residential and business directories. No run of the *Belmont Courier* could be located and the available Sanborn fire insurance maps for 1913 and1932 (see attached) show only the area from Ralston to O'Niell and Old County Road to Schmoll, (Sixth Ave.).Fortunatly a number of early residents with excellent memories still reside in Belmont, chief among them being Mr. Bert Johnson, Mr. Russ

Estep and Mrs. Doris Vannier. Members of the Roussel and Smith families of builders also provided important information on the development of the Waltermire historic district and other areas.

A third phase of the project required the description and significance of each property to be summarized on a state inventory form, (DPR 523 Rev. 6/90). Review and evaluation of the selected properties followed with their prioritization for inclusion in the survey based upon selected criteria found below. Funding limited the initial study to approximatly 50 properties while an additional 50 or so were placed on a follow-up list for inclusion as funding and/or research time permit. Properties were listed as landmarks, historic resources and contributing buildings within historic districts. A brief overview of the city's development was included to place the selected resources in their appropriate historic contexts. Properties are listed alphabetically by street name and number for ease of identification as well as seperate listing by historic district where applicable. District maps and a color coded base map of the city were the final components of the study.

Belmont properties potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the criteria employed for resource evaluation and the catagories of historic importance and their definitions are here listed.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

The Secretary of the Interior has established specific standards for the inclusion of properties on the National Register of Historic Places. The three basic standards require that properties, (a) possess significance, (b) that the significance satisfy at least one of the Register's criteria for qualification and, (c) that the properties significance be derived from an understanding of its historic context.

A historic context according to National Register Bulletin #16, "is a body of information about historic properties organized by theme, place and time. It is the organization of information about our prehistory and history according to the stages of development occuring at various times and places. A single historic context describes one or more important aspects of the historic development of an area, relating to history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture."

"A context may be based on one or a series of events or activities, patterns of community development, or associations with the life of a person or group of persons that influenced the destiny and character of a region. It may be based on a stage of physical development, the evolution of a building form and architectural style, or the use of a material and method of construction that helped shape the historic identity of a community."

National Register criterion specifically address the issue of context from three perspectives.

(A) The statement of context should explain how the event or pattern of events made an important contribution to the history of the locality, state or nation, and what related types of properties are likely to exist that still reflect those events and patterns.

(B) The statement of context should explain why the person with whom the property is associated is important to the history of the locality, state or nation. It should identify also the range of properties surviving associated with the person and their relative role in the career of the person.

(C) The statement of context should explain why architecturally, (a) that type, period or method of construction represents a property type or displays architectural features that are significant in the architectural development of the locality, state or nation, (b) as the work of a master the statement should provide sufficient factual information about the career and work of the artist, architect or landscape architect to demonstrate that the person was accomplished in his/her field and made contributions to the art, architecture or landscape architecture of the locality, state or nation, and, (c) for its high artistic values the statement should explain the quality of artistry or craftsmanship present in comparable works in the locality, state or nation.

(D) The statement of context should explain why the information the site is likely to yield is important to the knowledge of the history or prehistory of the locality, state or nation.

BELMONT PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

The following individual Belmont properties and districts appear to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The indicator to the right denotes the criterion under which each may qualify as well as the subsection, (criterion C).

Address	Date	Style	N.R Criterion
709 Alameda	1925F	French Eclectic	A or C,(a)
1060 Alameda	1920F	Mission Revival	C,(c)
1 Davey Glen	1890F	Queen Anne/ T.R.	B or C,(c)
600 Kingston	1927F	Tudor Revival	C,(a)
700 Ralston	1903F	Commercial	A or B
843 Ralston	1899F	Eclectic	A or B
1085 Ralston	1907F	Mission Revival	A or C,(a)
1500 Ralston	1864F	Italianiate	already listed
1556 Sixth Ave.	1925A	Spanish Eclectic	C,(a),(c)
857 South Rd.	1907A	Mission Revival	C,(a)

DISTRICTS

BELBURN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

This grouping of residences along Belburn Drive and Avon Street was constructed between 1927 and 1930 as part of the Belburn Village

subdivision. It was located adjacent to a then existing golf course along the north side of Belburn Drive, The quality of construction and unity of design of the Tudor Revival homes that constituted the initial stage of the subdivision's development is still apparent in the excellent maintenance and upkeep of the properties some sixty years later. It was no accident that the house at 1801 Belburn was employed in 1950's Belmont Chamber of Commerce promotional literature as "a typical Belmont residence" to promote the development of the community. The district should qualify for National Register listing under criterion A and C,(a),(c).

Address	Date	Style
903 Avon	1927F	Tudor Revival
904 Avon	1927F	Tudor Revival
909 Avon	1927F	Tudor Revival
910 Avon	1927F	Tudor Revival
913 Avon	1927F	Tudor Revival
1617 Belburn	1928F	Tudor Revival
1703 Belburn	1927F	Tudor Revival
1705 Belburn	1927F	Tudor Revival
1789 Belburn	1927F	Tudor Revival
1801 Belburn	1927F	Tudor Revival
1803 Belburn	1927F	Tudor Revival

WALTERMIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Bounded on the north by Waltermire Street, the east by Palm Ave., the south by O'Neill Ave., and the west by Sixth Ave. the Waltermire Historic District contains the largest single concentration of residential housing units built prior to 1930 in Belmont, and its 1936 fireshouse. Its building stock ranges in date from about 1900 to 1930 and represents the evolution of popular building styles in the community from the Queen Anne to the Spanish Eclectic revival. Most of the residences found in the district were the product of two early two early carpenter/builder families, the Roussels and the Smiths. Only two of the original structures have been so modified as to render them non-contributing. New construction has been minimal. Based on early, (1913-25) documentation the Waltermire Historic District retains to a remarkable degree its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association that represent a significant and distinguishable entity that should yield information important to the history of the development of Belmont. The district should qualify for the National Register under criterion A, B and D.

Address	Date	Style
875 O'Neill	1936F	Spanish Eclectic
900 O'Neill	1928A	English Cottage
1255 Fifth Ave.	1907F	Vernacular
1201 Sixth Ave.	1928A	English Cottage
1235 Sixth Ave.	1900A	Queen Anne
1265 Sixth Ave.	1905F	Eastern Shingle
845 Waltermire	1923F	Bungalow
901 Waltermire	1905F	Eastern Shingle
925 Waltermire	1924F	Bungalow
935 Waltermire	1920F	Colonial Revival (Federal)
955 Waltermire	1928F	Bungalow

It is possible that further National Register nominees will come from the survey based upon research findings. However some properties that do not qualify for listing on the National Register may qualify for state recognition, particularly the California Points of Historic Interest program. The Church of the Good Shepard is so listed. At this writing Janke's Belmont Gardens, (Twin Pines Park) and Ralston's Water Dog Lake may be good candidates for this program.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Consistency is the key to an even handed treatment in the designation of historic resources. To be consistent, a number of questions must be asked about any structure or site to determine its significance. Relevant evaluation criteria for a specific locale should be based in part on the particular character of the region or community in question, its own historic context.

The City of Belmont adopted basic criteria for evaluating historic properties in August of 1973 through Resolution No. 3994. In July of 1974, the original document was amended through Resolution No. 4154 and included a listing of significant community resources. Those resources have been incorporated into the current resource inventory.

While paralleling in part that of the National Register of Historic Places, Belmont's existing criteria lacks certain provisions that would otherwise qualify it for access to the following federal and state funding programs.

The National Register of Historic Places has established criteria that is in general use through the United States. One facet of its specific employment is to qualify historic buildings, structures and sites for federal assistance including the use of investment tax credits.

California's Health and Safety Code, Part 10, Chapter 2, under Section 37626 requires certain mandatory criteria for the selection of historical properties eligible for use of its Historical Rehabilitation Financing Program.

The recent adoption by the State Historical Resources Commission (22 April 88) of a California Register of Historic Resources which includes Folklife Resources, "whether they be tangible or intangible," also contains a relevant list of criteria for inclusion of resources on the Register. Of particular interest is its handling of historic properies that have been moved and relocated.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of state and local importance that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or

2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or,

3. That embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or

4. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (36 CFR 60.6)

CALIFORNIA STATE CODE CRITERIA

a. its character, interest or value as part of the local, regional, state or national history, hertitage or culture;

b. its location as a site of significant historic events;

c. its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the local, regional, state, or national culture or history;

d. its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historic heritage of the locale. (City of Belmont)

e. its portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.

f. its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen;

g. its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose works have influenced the development of the locale, (city)

h. its embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation or which are unique;

i. Rare structures displaying a building type, design, or indigenous building form.

j. Outstanding examples of structures displaying original architectural integrity, structurally or stylistically, or both;

k. Unique structures or places that act as focal or pivotal points important as a key to the character or visual quality of an area.

l. Historical and culturally significant grounds, gardens and objects.

m. Its relationship to other designated landmarks, historic resources or historic districts if its preservation is essential to the integrity of the landmarks, historic resources or historic districts.

By employing the above criteria in a uniform and consistent manner in designating local historic resources for inclusion on an offical city listing, their owners and the city can benefit from existing and future federal and state programs aimed at protecting these irreplaceable cultural assets.

LANDMARKING AT THE STATE LEVEL

California currently has two types of historic designation, the State Historical Landmarks program, and the Point of Historical interest program. Both programs are administered by the Office of Historic Preservation with application approvals made by the State Historic Resources Commission.

STATE HISTORIC LANDMARK

The State Historical Landmarks program recognizes buildings, Objects, sites, and structures of statewide significance. The site must be the first, last, only, or most significant of a type in a region, (defined as a large geographical entity such as the "San Francisco Bay area"). Applications for historical landmark registration are considered from a broad range of historical influences, and may emphasize contributions to the state by individuals. Significant architectural landmarks can be considered for listing if they meet established program criteria.

CALIFORNIA POINT OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Established in 1965 this program was initiated to enable the state to recognize officially points of local intrest that do not qualify for State Historical Landmark designation. The criteria governing the registration of Points of Historical Interest are generally the same as those which govern the state historical landmark program, but are oriented toward local, city, or county areas.

Nomination process

Forms and criteria may be obtained by writing the State Office of Historic Preservation. Nominations for the State Historical Landmarks require conclusive documentation that the property is of statewide significance. If the site is of architectural significance an appropriate Chapter Preservation Officer of the American Institute of Architects must complete a section of the nomination form certifying that the property is of statewide significance. All nominations for the landmarks program must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the property owner.

Applications for the Points of Historical Interest program must be signed by the Chairman of the local County Board of Supervisors and must be accompanied by a letter of support from the local historical society or historic resources commission.

California Register of Historic Resources

A new state program, the California Register of Historic Resources was established in 1984 as a product of the California Heritage Task Force. Final standards for listing in this register have yet to be determined. The program has yet to be implemented by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Protection of designated resources

Designation under any of these state programs offers some resource protection. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), if the designated property might be affected by any developmental action, a study of potential impacts and their mitigation is required. Listed resources qualify for use of the Mills Act, a vehicle for property tax reduction. Designation also provides building code flexibility because the property becomes eligible to be considered under the California Historical Building Code. Such properties if publicly owned generally qualify for preservation funding under state park bond acts when passed.

CATAGORIES AND DEFINITIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

LANDMARK (Highest Importance): The first, last, only or most significant of a type in a region, over fifty years old, possessing integrity of original location and intangible elements of feeling and association. A site or structure no longer standing may possess significance if the person or event associated with the structure was of transcendent importance to the community's history and the assocaition consequential. Every effort should be made to retain the original exterior appearance of the landmark, including its immediate setting and, on an advisory basis, to encourage uses which would maintain the interior, of in its original configuration.

HISTORIC RESOURCE (Major Importance): A Historic Resource is a structure, site or feature which is representative of a historic period or building type but us not of Landmark quality. Modifications of the feature, including change of use, additions, etc., are acceptable as long as the resource retains the essential elements which make it historically valuable.

Historic Districts: A geographically definable area with a significant concentration of buildings, structures, sites, spaces, or objects unified by past events, physical development, design, setting, materials, workmanship, sense of cohesiveness or related historical and aesthetic associations.

Within a Historic District, the following designations would apply:

A **CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**, site, structure, or object that adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations or archaeologic values for which a district is significant because (a) it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time, or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or (b) it independently meets the Landmark or Historic Resource criteria.

A **NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING**, (Contextual Importance) site, structure, or object that does not add to the architectural qualities, historic associations, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because (a) it was not present during the period of significance, (b) due to alteration, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is incapable of yielding important information about the period, or (c) it does not independently meet Landmark or Historic Resource criteria.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BELMONT HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Street Address		Designation	Significance
600	Alameda	HR	Arch
751	Alameda	L	Arch/Hist
790	Alameda	L	Arch/Hist
838	Alameda	HR	Arch
1060	Alameda	L	Arch/Hist
1060	Alameda	HR	Hist
903	Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
904	Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
909	Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
910	Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
913	Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
1617	Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch/Hist
1703	Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1705	Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1789	Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1801	Belburn Dr.	L	Arch/Hist
1803	Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
2200	Carlmont Dr.	L	Arch/Hist
1	Davey Glen Dr.	L	Hist
730	El Camino	HR	Arch
1426-28	El Camino	HR	Arch
1240	Elmer St.	HR	Arch
1602	Francis Ave.	HR	Arch/Hist
1255	Fifth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1300	Fifth Ave.	L	Arch/Hist

L - Landmark; HR - Historic Resource; C - Building Contributing in a Historic District

525 Kingston Rd.	HR	Arch
600 Kingston Rd.	L	Arch
2351 Lyall Way	HR	Arch/Hist
588 Middle Rd.	HR	Arch/Hist
2020 Mezes Ave.	HR	Arch
1110 Old County Rd.	HR	Arch/Hist
875 O'Neill St.	L	Arch/Hist
900 O'Neill St.	HR/C	Arch
700 Ralston Ave.	L	Arch/Hist
843 Ralston Ave.	L	Arch/Hist
1085 Ralston Ave.	L	Arch/Hist
1403 Ralston Ave.	HR	Arch
1500 Ralston Ave. (3 sites)	L	Arch/Hist
1085 Sixth Ave.	HR	Arch
1201 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1235 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1265 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1441 Sixth Ave.	HR	Arch
1457 Sixth Ave.	HR	Arch
1556 Sixth Ave.	L	Arch
857 South Rd.	L	Arch
1441 Sunnyslope Ave.	HR	Arch
845 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
901 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch/Hist
925 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
935 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
955 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch

BELBURN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESCRIPTION

The two block area of Belburn Drive and Avon Street that constitute the Belburn Village Historic District consist mostly of one and two story examples of Tudor Revival style residences. Belburn Drive runs on a generally east/west axis with views north toward the former grounds of the Ralston estate and west toward the Belmont hills. Avon Street runs generally north/south with views north toward the Belmont hills, and south to tree lined Ralston Avenue. As originally laid out in 1927 Belburn Drive paralleled the southern boundry of the Hillcrest Golf Course, since infilled with residential housing.Its south side, where the resources are found is charaterized by mature plantings of street trees and shrubs fronting well maintained yards with moderate and fairly uniform setbacks. Avon Street while similar in most respects to Belburn Dr. has lost some of its mature street trees. Those losses are being replaced with new plantings. County records indicate that all the contributing buildings were constructed in 1927 & 1928 explaining in part their unity of design. Residences at 900,901,905,911 and 915 Avon, and 1701 Belburn represent late 1930's & early post war infill and do not detract from the district as proposed, as do the two new neo-Tudor buildings at 912 and 914 Avon, which are compatible in scale & style with the neighborhood. All the contributing residences are stucco with some form of half-timbering use multi-paned windows and have large decorative brick chimneys typical of the Tudor form.

SIGNIFICANCE

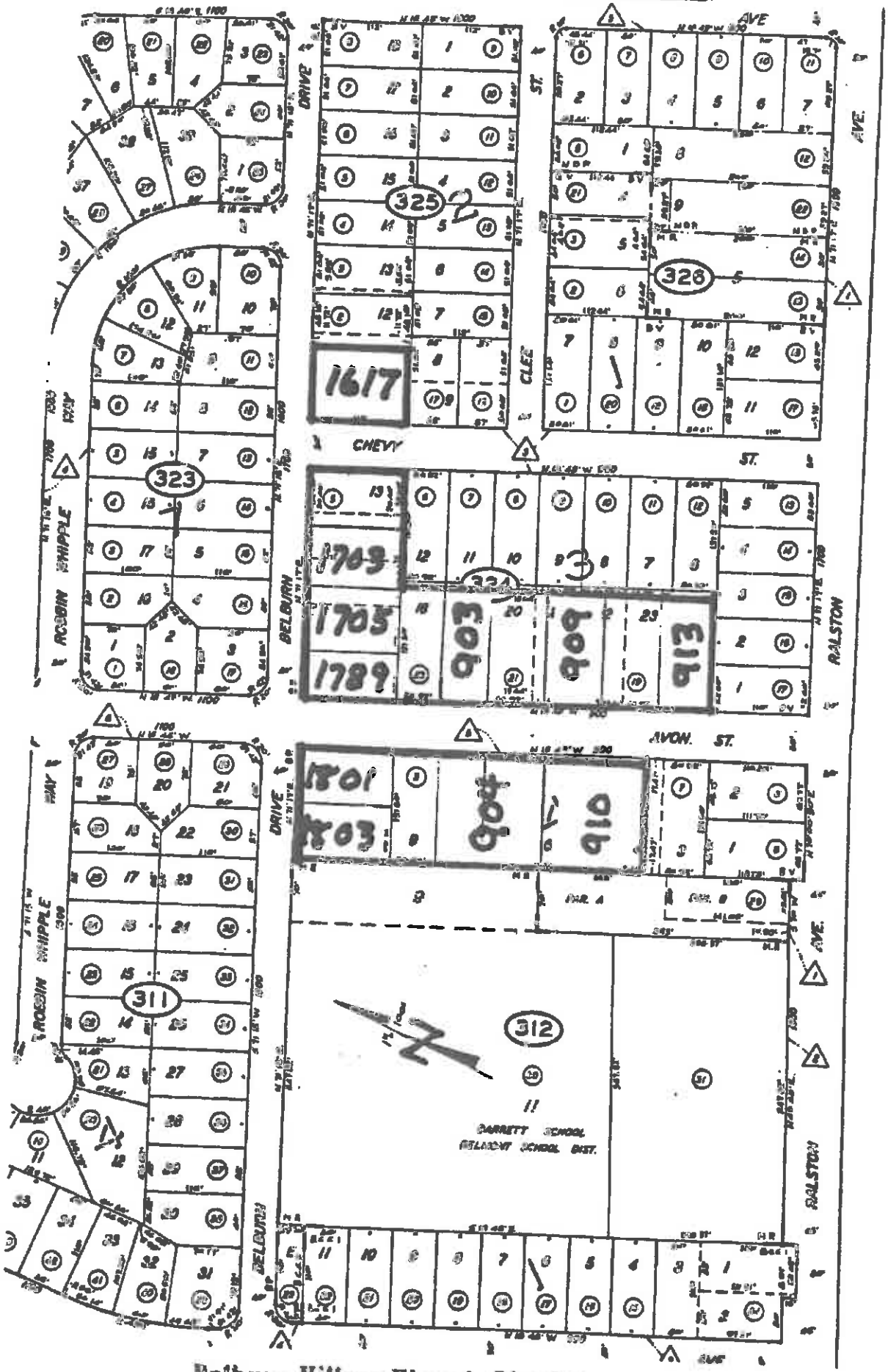
The Belburn Village Historic District is notable for its age and the integrity of its concentration of Tudor Revival residences, all constructed during the two year period 1927-1928. The homes along Belburn Drive and Avon Street were the first in the Belburn Village subdivision to fill in because of their location adjacent to the greens of the Hillcrest Golf Course. Belburn Village was one of ten subdivisions initiated on a thousand acre parcel in northwest Belmont by the Belmont Country Club Properties Corporation between 1924 & 1929. This development, although only partially successful due to poor financial planning and the subsequent national economic depression, initiated the necessary residential growth in the community to see its incorporation as a city by 1927. The overall architectural ambiance of the Country Club Properties development was one of romantic period revival architecture popular throughout the United States

in the 1920's. The Spanish Eclectic and Tudor prevaded with some examples of Colonial forms. Because of the great size of the overall development individual examples of these architectural styles were widely dispersed throughout the area. Post WWII housing infill included the original nine hole golf course. This further isolated the early building types. Only the collection of Tudor residences along Belburn Dr. and Avon St. are left to identify the design intent of the country club planners in what was Belmont's largest single real estate development.

BELBURN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Street address	Designation	Significance
903 Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
904 Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
909 Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
910 Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
913 Avon St.	HR/C	Arch
1617 Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch/Hist
1703 Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1705 Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1789 Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch
1801 Belburn Dr.	L	Arch/Hist
1803 Belburn Dr.	HR/C	Arch

L - Landmark; HR - Historic Resource; C - Contributing Building to a Historic District



Belburn Village Historic District

WALTERMIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESCRIPTION

The Waltermire Historic District consists of approximatly two city blocks. It is bounded by the southerly side of Waltermire St. between El Camino Real and Sixth Ave., the Easterly side of Sixth Ave. between Waltermire St. and O'Niell Ave., the northerly side of O'Niell Ave. between Sixth Ave. and El Camino Real. Its easterly boundry is set in from El Camino Real approximatly 75 feet and runs between O'Neill and Waltermire. Fifth Ave. bisects the district north to south between Waltermire and O'Niell. The old city firehouse, a proposed part of the district, is on the southeast corner of Fifth and O'Niell. The district includes mainly examples of one & two story residences in a variety of styles dating from 1905 to 1936. Waltermire St. runs on a generally east/west axis with views to the east showing highly traveled El Camino Real. To the west a remodeled victorian residence backed by the trees of Twin Pines City Park is visible. Sixth Ave. runs on a generally north/south axis with views north toward a commercial district and south to a residential neighborhood. O'Niell Ave. runs generally east/west with El Camino to the east and elements of Twin Pines City Park as well as Residentially developed foothills to the west. El Camino Real runs generally north/south and is commercially developed in both directions with the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks parallel on the east side of the highway. Fifth Ave. runs generally north/south with a Safeway building visible to the north and the old city firehouse to the south. The Safeway building is on the approximate site of an early primary school. There is considerable mature planting within the proposed district including palms and a variety of conifers that appear in early1920's photographs of Waltermire and Sixth Aves. Original residences at 885-87 Waltermire & 920 O'Niell have been remodeled over time reducing their contribution to the districts character. Two modern structures at 1250 & 1291 Fifth Ave. are non-contributors to an area that otherwise has retained its integrity as a cohesive early Belmont neighborhood.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Waltermire historic district is significant because its the oldest remaining intact Belmont neighborhood and its housing stock represents the highest concentration of early residential buildings in the city including a1936 firehouse. These buildings range in date of construction from 1905 to1936 and include examples of Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival, Bungalow, Spanish Eclectic and English Cottage styles of architecture. The majority of the contributing residences were the product of two

carpenter/builder families, the Roussels and the Smiths who have long histories of community service. Only two of the original structures have been so modified as to diminish their integrity of design. New construction has been minimal. Based upon early photographic documentation, (1913-1925) the proposed historic district retains to a remarkable degree its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association that represent a significant and distinguishable entity in the context of an early Belmont working class neighborhood and should yield information important to the history of the development of the community.

WALTERMIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Street Address	Designation	Significance
875 O'Neill St.	L	Arch/Hist
900 O'Neill St.	HR/C	Arch
1255 Fifth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1201 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1235 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
1265 Sixth Ave.	HR/C	Arch
845 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
901 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch/Hist
925 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
935 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch
955 Waltermire St.	HR/C	Arch

L - Landmark; HR - Historic Resource; C - Contributing Building in a Historic District

Waltermire Historic District

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A HISTORICAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION PROGRAM IN BELMONT

On the surface Belmont seems to have few physical reminders of its history and growth from a country crossroads to an incorporated city of twenty-four thousand. Appearances can be deceiving however. Belmont not only retains an excellent selection of building styles indicative of the changes in architectural fashion over time but also retains significant historic resources from practically every major period of its development. These resources range from properties listed as National Historic Landmarks to a simple bronze bell with the inscription "Aunt Hattie", one of the last artifacts identifying the former location of the Reid School for Boys.

After reviewing the survey findings, the City's General Plan and local ordinances, and preservation program formats from other California cities, the following recommendations are made for a Belmont Historical Resources Preservation Program:

1. That after notification of affected property owners and appropriate public hearings the inventory be adopted by the City Council as the "1991 Belmont Historic Resources Inventory".

2. That the City adopt the Landmark, Historic Resource, and Historic District catagories and definitions outlined in the final report.

3. That the City Council adopt an "H" (historic/overlay) Zoning District encompasing the affected properties (see Base Map supplied).

4. That the City employ the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, (Revised 1990) as administrative design review guidelines for any proposed exterior changes to designated landmarks, historic resources or historic districts that might affect the character of listed resources.

5. That the city will develop and publish, with the approval of the planning commission, design guideline standards for each designated historic district and general infill adjacent to designated landmarks.

6. That the proposed Historic Overlay Zoneing district include the property evaluation criteria (from the methodology section of the final

report) as the means of judging potential future additions to the city's historic resource inventory and the Historic Overlay Zone.

7. That the City revise housing rehabilitation loan programs as appropriate to permit use of such funds for all historic structures within the City.

8. That the City Building and Planning Departments follow full applications of the State Historic Building Code (Title 24, Part B) to all construction involved with properties included on or added to the Belmont Historic Resources Inventory.

9. That, when the General Plan is next amended, appropriate policies and programs be included which reflect the content and findings of this inventory and report

10. That the City modify zoning ordinance provisions to discourage demolition and to assure preservation of the historical and architectural character of structures and neighborhoods which are subject to development pressures for higher use or commercial development. (In this context your Ordinance No. 513 of August 1, 1973, may be the guiding codicil, if still in effect.)

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOUND IN BELMONT

The Belmont Historic Resources Inventory is one of a number of such studies completed, being conducted, or contemplated throughout San Mateo County in order to build a comprehensive data base of cultural resources countrywide. The following general discussion of architectural style and individual building forms by Katherine Solomonson comes from a recently completed historic resource inventory of the City of San Mateo. Common sense suggests that the use of a basic set of stylistic architectural descriptions will help avoid confusion and inconsistency in the larger county context. Only those building styles found in Belmont are incorporated in this section.

What is Style? Style is more than the presence of a red tile roof or a row of classical columns. It includes the building's proportions, how its volumes are put together, the treatment of its wall surfaces--the totality of how the building is assembled--plus the details of its structure and ornamentation. Underlying this is a consistent system of proportions. An Italianate, for example, tends to be a composition of vertical rectangular units, from the overall shape of the house itself to the proportions of the windows. Even the ornamental details bear this out. A bungalow, on the other hand, is made up of broad horizontal elements. These proporations are likely to be consistent from one Italianate house to another, and from one bungalow to another. Specific ornamental details may assist in identifying a style, but the way they are used and how they are combined with other elements distinguishes one style from another. Classical columns appear on Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical buildings, but in each case how they are used and the context in which they appear is completely different.

What Style Reveals about Buildings. Style relates a building to others like it and to a larger tradtion. An analysis of a building's style may suggest when it was built and the degree of its stylistic integrity--that is, how consistent it is with the characteristics of its style and how good an example it is of its type. This can show whether the building is a particularly notable or unusual example, whether it has any particular exaggerations, or whether any of its elements are odd or unusual. It may happen that the building has a number of stylistic inconsistencies. These may suggest that the building represents a transition from one style to another; that the builder assembled elements from more than one stylistic tradtition; or that the building has some later additions or alterations.

Some of the houses in San Mateo County were constructed from pattern books. These were popular throughout the United States, circulating

This meant that people from coast to coast were often looking at pages of the same books and adapting the designs to their own needs. California archititects and builders sometimes developed their own regional versions of styles common across the country. Sometimes the houses constructed from pattern books are stylistically consistent and remarkably similar to the drawings on which they were based. In other cases, however, stylistic features are mixed in unorthodox ways, as if the builder looked at the page showing a Gothic Revival cottage when planning the main structure, but took inspiration from the Italianate page when it came to the ornamentation. Similar details may appear on both the largest and the most modest houses. Or on one block there may be a number of houses with nearly identical plans but with variations in the details.

Problems with Stylistic Terminology. If you flip through the many good stylistic guides to American architecture available today, you will find that the styles are not always consistently named. One book may identify a house with a red tile roof, stucco walls, and wrought iron ornamentation as Mediterranean, while others may call it Spanish Eclectic or Spanish Colonial Revival. For the sake of clarity, one name has been selected for each style.

The terminology used today does not always correspond to how people identified a building in the past. The "Stick Style" is an excellent example of this. Architectural historian Vincent Scully noticed that strips of wood were applied to the surfaces of many houses between about 1860 and 1890. These not only ornament the houses but refer to the wooden frames which support them structurally. As good an observation as this is, the term "Stick Style" did not exist in the minds of the people who built these houses. Many of these could more accurately be described as Italianate, Eastlake, or Queen Anne. For this reason, although "Stick Style" appears in may stylistic guides to American architecture, we rarely use it in the survey of San Mateo County's buildings.

There are times when we might identify a building's style in one way while in the past it was looked at in a different way entirely. Today, San Diego's Hotel del Coronado (1886-88) could be identified as Queen Anne, but in the late nineteenth century it was considered a Mission or Spanish style structure because of its inner court. Written and oral sources, when available provide invaluable insight into how a buiding's style was defined at the time in which it was built, but unfortunately such sources often are not readily available. So our task, then, it to look carefully at a building's features so that we can come as close as possible to an accurate identification of its style.

"Victorian" Architecture. People often describe mid to late nineteenth-century buildings with vertical proportions and lavish wooden ornamentation as "Victorians." The term, which comes from the period of England's Queen Victorian's reign (1837 to 1901), is actually a convenient catch-all for a number of more specific styles. These include the Gothic Revival, the Italianate, and the Queen Anne styles, which will be discussed individually rather than under the general heading of "Victorian." While these styles have some elements in common, they were regarded in their own time not as examples of the Victorian style, but as individual styles in their own right, with a certain amount of overlapping.

Commercial Architecture. Commercial structures present their own problems and definitions. Sometimes they are simple boxes with ornamentation that defies any imaginable categorization. Recently the Preservation Press has published *The Buildings of Main Street* by Richard Longstreth. In this excellent guide to American commercial architecture, Longstreth classifies buildings according to the composition of their facades. In our descriptions of commercial architecture, we have adopted Longstreth's method and combined it with stylistic identification wherever possible. For this reason, such descriptions are "two-part commercial block with classical (or Colonial, or Spanish) ornamentation" frequently appear in our write-ups on commerical buildings.

Style as a Window into the Past. Architectural styles reveal much about the past. In 1918, Chicago architect Louis Sullivan articulated this ~~particularly~~ particularly well:

> If, for the word, 'style' we substitute the word, civilization, we make at once pronounced stride in advance toward an intelligent understanding of the 'values' of historical monuments.
> --*Kindergarten Chats*

A building's style may provide a window into the lives and values of the people who built and used the buildings we are surveying today: how they related to the community or to nature, how they looked at the world, and even their fantasies and aspirations. Style conveys meaning. A careful look at a building's style helps to place a building in its stylistic context, and it also brings us into closer contact with the lives of the people who built and used the building in the past.

Architectural Styles Found in Belmont.

In describing the various styles prevalent in San Mateo County until about 1940, we first list the styles' characteristics. This is a sort of shopping list of features commonly found in buildings of a given mode. A specific building need not have all of the features listed to be identified with that style. Following the list of characteristics we talk more generally about the form, how it got to California, how it was interpreted here, and what it meant to those who chose it for their buildings.

Gothic Revival (1840-1880 & until 1940)

*vertical proporations in overall massing and in details
* steeply pitched roofs--usually gabled, with cross gables
*bargeboards, sometimes ornamented
*windows with pointed arches
*jigsaw-cut ornament
*verandas and porches
*foliated ornament

In the 1830s, Alexander Jackson Davis began to design large Gothic villas for his wealthy clients on the East Coast. At the time, the American public was devouring Sir Walter Scott's romantic novels about Medieval life. Scott presented a world of pageantry and heroism against the backdrop of carefully described Gothic settings, stirring the imagination of readers on both sides of the Atlantic. Davis gave tangible form to the world Scott conjured in words. His Gothic villas are great stone heaps with irregular massings, sprouting turrets, battlements, and pinnacles, lit with pointed windows.

While Davis' villas were within the reach of only the wealthy client, Andrew Jackson Downing popularized a form of the Gothic Revival style which was more easily accessible to the general public. Through vigorous public speaking and a series of pattern books, Downing promoted a smaller, more informal Gothic Revival home that included some of the decorative elements of Davis' estate houses, but were adapted to the needs of everyday American families. His books (*Cottage Residences*, 1842, and *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850) included three-dimensional views, floor plans, and details. Although Downing's houses lack the turrets, battlements, and heavy masonry of Davis's massive villas, they maintain the picturesque irregularity of silhouette, the Gothic foliated ornament, and the

pointed arches used in the larger villas. In their greatly simplified form they are only distant relatives of their European ancestors.

To Downing, who was a landscape architect, the harmonization of the houses with the natural landscape was particularly important. He believed that the Gothic Revival cottage's irregular contours blended well with the irregular topography of the countryside. Houses were to be painted in soft, natural colors rather than the stark white used in Greek Revival architecture, and building materials were to bne used in an honest and undisguised way. The winding paths leading to the doors of the houses shown in Downing's books echoed the contours of the land, and wide porches provided a welcoming transition from outdoors to indoors. Downing believed that his approach to planning suited the pure, simple life of the countryside and the values of the family living in harmony with nature.

Gothic Revival houses were built with a new type of structure, a balloon frame. Rather than employing a few heavy beams with carefully made pegged joinery, the balloon frame uses a great many light wooden members connected with mass-produced nails. The result was a frame that was easier and faster to build, and more flexible in the way it could be arranged. The balloon frame lent itself well to the irregularity of the Gothic Revival cottage with its jutting gables and bays, as well as to succeeding styles on into the present day.

There are two remaining examples of Gothic Revival architecture in Belmont. A residence located at 1602 Francis Way, and the Church of Good Shepherd at 1300 Fifth Avenue. The Francis Way house is notable for its pointed windows and porch trim as well as the stylized trois-foil in the bargeboard at the gable peak. This neat Gothic cottage was originally located adjacent to William Ralston's gas plant, constructed in 1869 on what are now the grounds of the Notre Dame High School at about Chula Vista Drive. The "Redwood Gothic" Church of Good Shepherd was constructed in 1876 on land donated by the Schmoll family along Old County Road south of Ralston Avenue. It was moved to the Fifth Ave. location in 1935 and over the next few years greatly remodeled. However, the pointed windows so typical of the style still identify the original chapel of Belmont's first church which is now registered as a California Point of Historic Interest.

The Gothic Revival house, as Downing interpreted it, persisted until about 1880. For public buildings and institutions, however, the Gothic Revival had a longer life, lasting until about 1940. From the 1820's on, the Gothic style was used extensively for churches because of the style's connection with the great European cathedrals. It was also regarded as an

appropriate style for colleges, universities, and schools, harking back to the Medieval European colleges. There also are numerous public buildings with Gothic details. Twentieth-century public buildings tend to be more massive that the mid nineteenth century Gothic revival houses, and they usually are constructed in terra cotta, stone, or brick rather than wood. They have simple, smooth surfaces with Gothic details in terra cotta or carved stone clustered at specific points. While the picturesque cottages Downing advocated bore little resemblance to Medieval European architecture except in a few details, some features of the larger public buildings were somewhat closer to their European prototypes. In recent years, the Gothic style has once again become a source of inspiration for contemporary architects.

Italianate (1840s-1880s)

***vertical proportions**
***often asymmetrical in plan**
***hipped or flat roof**
***overhanging eaves**
***decorative brackets, especially at the cornice**
***square tower**
***round-headed windows**
***tall, narrow rectangular windows**
***bay windows**
***corner quoins imitating stone corner reinforcements**
***classical ornamentation, such as columns, dentils pediments**
***balustrated balconies and verandas**

Along with the Gothic style Andrew Jackson Downing also promoted the Italianate as a style appropriate to country houses. This picturesque style was thought to allude to a romantic pastoral past. American Italianate houses were inspired by Northern Italian farmhouses as they were represented in late eighteenth-century paintings. In the nineteenth century, English architects adapted them to the English countryside, and they became known in the United States through English pattern books. In the United States, the Italianate style was reinterpreted to such a great extent that it usually only vaguely resembles its Italianate forebears.

Like the Gothic Revival cottage, the Italianate villa was considered appropriate to a rural setting because of its asymmetry and picturesque qualities. The soft colors Downing recommended for the exterior harmonized with nature, and the wide verandas on many Italianate houses provided a shady outdoors during the hot summers. By the 1860s the Italianate style had overtaken the Gothic Revival in popularity and was widely used for

buildings of all types. Although the Italianate style was initially recommended for houses in rural areas, its vertical proportions suited narrow urban lots, as the rows of Italianate town houses in San Francisco attest. It also was used commonly for commerical buildings, many of which have long rows of round-headed windows and classical detailing. Some say that the Italianate became almost a national style, so thoroughly was it reinterpreted according to American needs and tastes.

The Italianate villa may first have been introduced to the San Francisco Bay area in the 1850s by Downing's friend, architect Henry Cleaveland. At that time, the peninsula was becoming a fashionable area for country villas. On August 29, 1852, *Alta California* reported, with some degree of overstatement, that most San Franciscans of substance had country estates on which they had, or planned to build, a country house. The earliest Italianate design in the area may have been Cleaveland's original design for William C. Ralston's country house in Belmont. The original Walter Emmett store at 700 Ralston Avenue was a simple one-story example of the form as was his home at 843 Ralston which was raised one story in 1899 changing its character. The store was replaced with a new, larger structure in 1903 which is still in place. A row of brackets typical of the Italianate style can still be seen between the first and second stories of the Emmett house.

Queen Anne (1880-1910)

***irregular and asymmetrical massing, a convergence of varied shapes and volumes achieved through the use of a variety of towers, turrets, gables, and dormers**
***towers topped with pointed witch's caps or bulbous roofs**
***recessed upstairs balconies**
***large front porches sometimes curving around the corner**
***bay windows**
***varied textures and materials activating wall surfaces**
***small-scale details; fish-scale shingles**
***classical ornamentation**
***spindlework, lattice work,or garlands**
***ornamented bargeboards**
***stained glass**

The Queen Anne style enjoyed widespread popularity across the United States in the late nineteenth century. It originated in England in the late 1860s when architects such as Richard Norman Shaw turned to late medieval

prototypes for inspiration. The name, "Queen Anne," is something of a misnomer, however, because the style bears little resemblance to the architecture that was actually constructed during the reign of England's Queen Anne (1702-14). Rather, it is a combination of various late Medieval elements reinterpretedd in late nineteenth century terms. American architects were aware of the Queen Anne style by the late 1870s, but the way they defined it was not very specific. In the architectural journal *American Architect* (April, 1877), it was defined as "any eccentricity in general design that one can suppose would have occurred to designers one hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago." Through architectural journals, popular magazines, and pattern books, the style gained widespread attention. American architects and builders interpreted the style in their own way so that the American version of the style is even further removed than the English version from anything Queen Anne herself would recognize.

The Queen Anne style was introduced into California in the early 1880s. Californians responded to the style's ornamental possibilities with even greater enthusiam that in other parts of the country. Although Californians did not generally use the slate roofs, Flemish chimneys, patterned masonry, tile, and brick popular further east, they more than made up for the lack of variety in materials through the variety of effects they achieved with wood. By lavishing ornament on their Queen Anne buildings, Californians tried to show that they had gone beyond the rudimentary architecture of their pioneer past and were capable of constructing houses beautiful enough to rival those in more established cultural centers. Not everyone liked this exuberant interpretation of the style. Some complained that the tendency to treat wood as if it were masonry was comparable to the (frowned upon) use of makeup. Art critic Ernest Peixotto was particularly critical of California's Queen Anne houses, calling them "absurdities...piled up without rhyme or reason--restless, turreted, gabled, loaded with meaningless detail, defaced with fantastic windows and hideous chimneys."

Only a few examples of the Queen Anne style remain in Belmont. Two cottages can be seen along Sixth Avenue. The one at 1085 was constructed by builder Charles Rich in 1898. The other at 1235 is cut down from a two-story house and was moved to its current location prior to1920 by local contractor George Roussel. While modest in scale a proliferation of sawn and turned wood details can be seen on each. The Sophie C. Haquette home at 730 El Camino, while lacking an abundance of decoration is a nice example of the basic form.

Colonial Revival (1880-1955)

- *simple rectangular volumes with few dramatic projecting elements
- *roofs gabled, hipped, or gambrel
- *symmetry, or balanced asymmetry
- *surfaces clapboard, brick shingled, or a combination
- *windows rectangular, circular, oval, Palladian
- *doors often elaborated with sidelights, pilasters, pediment, or fanlight
- *porch may be supported by columns and may run across width of facade; or it may be only a small entry porch, or in cottages, it may be on one side only
- *classical ornament and details derived from eighteenth-century American protpotypes (columns, dentils, pediments, cornices, entablatures, shutters, engaged piers)

By the turn of the century, the Colonial Revival began to overtake the Queen Anne in popularity. Although some small-scale classical elements were part of the Queen Anne vocabulary, by about the 1890's the Queen Anne entered a transitional phase, incorporating classical features as were used in Colonial architecture. While late Medieval English architecture inspired the Queen Anne style, the architecture of America's own past provided the basis for the Colonial Revival. The New England exhibit at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition stimulated a renewed interest in the styles prevalent in the colonies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as the early nineteenth century. Although much of the architecture built during this period was actually based upon European prototypes, the Colonial Revival asserted an American identity by looking at how these prototypes were reinterpreted on this continent.

The Colonial Revival style tends to be far more restrained than the Queen Anne. The Queen Anne style activates every surface with ornament and contrasting textures, and, with its numerous projecting elements, it is assertively asymmetrical. In contrast, Colonial Revival buildings restrict ornamentation to selected areas and are usually symmetrical in design. They tend to be made up of simple rectangular volumes, with few elements jutting out from their boxy silhouettes.

The Colonial Revival attracted attention throughout the United States, including California. Architectural journals published illustrations of Colonial architecture as models for the architect, and the general public. Because the style was associated specifically with the Colonial architecture of the Eastern Seaboard, some Californias did not think that it was particularly suitable to California's conditions. In his book, *The Simple Home* (1904), Charles Keeler asserted that "the meaningless white-paint fluted columns of hollow wood" were "wholly incongruous in the glare, newness and rush of western life." Nevertheless, the popularity of the Colonial Revival coincided with a period in which there was a great demand for housing. As a result, many Colonial Rivival houses were constructed in California.

In California the Colonial Revival was used primarily for domestic architecture, the earliest identified example in Belmont is located at 935 Waltermire Street. It is an elegantly proportioned translation of what was once a farm tankhouse into a residence in the Federal sub-style of the Colonial Revival. The large palladian window centered above a portico with port cochere locks in the balanced symmetry of this simple but gracious home designed by one of the Roussel family of builders.

Because the architecture of the colonial era was quite diverse, what we now call the Colonial Revival style is actually a cluster of styles based on a variety of prototypes. We have been discussing buildings that draw elements primarily from the Georgian, Federal, and Adam styles, all of which use classical forms. Another branch of the Colonial Revival refers back to a different set of Colonial houses with gambrel roofs. A good example of the Dutch Gambrel type built in about 1920 can be seen at 600 Alameda de las Pulgas. A particularly nice version of the later Georgian revival style, constructed in 1940 is located at 1403 Ralston Avenue.

One of the most common derivations from these sources was the Shingle Style, also known as the "Eastern Shingle Cottage." Builders of shingle-style houses based their designs on the earliest Colonial buildings of the seventeenth century. These tend to have simple boxy shapes, pronounced gables, and shingles or natural wood siding. The first story of the Eastern Shingle Cottage has elements that are similar to the Neoclassical Rowhouse--a recessed porch, a Bay window, and Classical details. The second story, with an enormous gable that turns the house into an oversized A, is a dramatic departure from the low-lying Neoclassic Rowhouse. Rather than clapboard siding, the house is covered with natural wood shingles. Architectural historian Vincent Scully described such houses as "Shingle Style." Shingled cottages also may have hipped roofs, or gambrel roofs derived from Dutch colonial architecture. In 1886 Willis Polk brought the

Shingle Style to the San Francisco Bay Area, where it took root and grew into a regional variation influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. We will discuss this further under the "Craftsman" heading.

A pair of shingle style cottages from the same pattern book plan can be found in the Waltermire Historic District. The one at 901 Waltermire St. was constructed in 1906 by contractor A. Roussel and John J. O'Brien for Wm. W. Mason at a cost of about $3,100. The second, probably in construction at the same time, at 1265 Sixth Ave. became the Roussel family home. Except for the treatment of the front porch openings which are rectangular on the Mason home and have paired simicircular arches in the Roussel home the residences are identical.

Although we have talked about the Eastern Shingle Cottage in a section separate from the more classical branch of the Colonial Revival, the two branches were intertwined. Both tend to have restrained ornamentation, boxy silhouettes, and few dramatic projecting elements. And there was also a considerable amount of exchange back and forth between the branches.

Mission Revival (1890-1915)

- plain, smooth stucco wall
- arched openings; the arches are usually semicircular and without moldings so that the pier, arch and building surface are a single plane
- tile roof with low pitch
- scalloped (curvilinear) parapeted gable ends
- bell towers, often paired and with tile roofs
- quatrefoil windows with surrounding cartouches, found especially in gable ends
- occasional domes
- terra cotta ornament

Beginning in the late 1880's, a number of Californians grew dissatisfied with the importation of architectural styles associated with the Eastern Seaboard. In 1882, Theodore Eisen, a prominent San Jose architect, pronounced to the members of the San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architects that the "models of classic architecture, with Frisco-American variations" were inappropriate to California. By the late 1880s, a movement was underway toward the development of an architecture appropriate to California's own colonial heritage and its regional conditions. Willis Polk, who also promoted classicism, began to publish articles on the Missions. The beginnings of a Mission Revival style gained national exposure

when Polk's colleague, A. Page Brown, designed the California Building for the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 using a pastiche of mission elements, including a red tile roof and long arcades.

To some, the California Mission, so different from Eastern Colonial architecture, elicited visions of a romantic and exotic past. Among these was Longfellow, who said, "A strange feeling of romance hovers about those old Spanish missions...They add much to the Pacific Coast." Charles Fletcher Lummis, on the other hand, recognized that they also were good for business. The missions, Lummis wrote, "are worth more money, are a greater asset to Southern California, than our oil, our oranges, or even our climate," and "a man is a poor fool who thinks he can do business without sentiment."

Sentiment, combined with business sense, stimulated the movement toward the restoration of the crumbling missions and the adaptation of mission design elements to warehouses, homes, office buildings, public buildings, and railroad stations. The Mission Revival style may be found throughout the United States, but it became most common in states with a Spanish colonial heritage. The style draws a variety of elements from the Franciscan missions. Its most distinctive feature is a curvilinear gable, combined with quatrefoil windows, tile roofs, terra cotta ornamentation, bell towers, and arched openings. In its simplest form, a Mission Revival building may be no more than a stucco box with a curvilinear gable. Because the style was originally intended for ecclesiastical structures, some found it awkward and inappropriate for other building types.

Although the Mission style was promoted as California's alternative to the Colonial Revival and classicism, only two residential examples are found in Belmont. However, both are of landmark quality. 1085 Ralston Avenue and 857 South Road have much in common in their basic design. This includes shaped mission parapets pierced with a quatrefoil motif, paired wood piers on surrounding porches and the use of similar ornamental tile in the interiors. These similarities in design and the fact that each was constructed in 1906, suggest that a Mr. Dalton, identified as the contractor for 857 South Road may have been involved with the construction of 1085 Ralston, San Francisco banker George Center's home. The South Road house was owned by William Havard, a contractor/builder from San Francisco. St. Michael's Hall at 1060 Alameda de las Pulgas was constructed in 1920 on the campus of the Belmont School for Boys at a cost of $39,000. It is a superb synthesis of the Mission Revival and Craftsman styles employed in church architecture.

Craftsman (1895-1920)

*simple boxy shapes
*low pitched roofs, sometimes hipped sometimes gabled
*often asymmetrical in design
*informal intimate scale
*constructed in a variety of materials: stucco, clapboard, shingled, board with batten, clinker brick, river boulder, or masonry
*exposed rafters, projecting beams, brackets
*pergolas
*low foundations, horizontal proportions, harmony with site
*wide horizontal windows, or windows in groups
*elaborate joinery
*open porches

The Arts and Crafts movement, which began in England in the early 1860s, became popular in the United States in the late 1890s. Gustave Stickley became the best-known American proponent of the movement. Beginning in 1901, he published an illustrated monthly called *The Craftsman* which popularized Arts and Crafts ideals. Its goal was the simplification of life and the improvement of design standards.

"My ideal of architeture," said Stickley, "is beauty through elimination." Ornament was not applied gratuitously, but was only used to enhance a buildings's essential structure. The natural qualities of building materials were respected and they were not disguised as something other than what they were. This contrasts sharply with the Queen Anne style's decorative surfaces, spindles, turned columns, and sunbursts. It also contrasts with the common nineteenth century practice of disguising one material as another: staining pine to look like mahogany, painting wood to look like marble, or treating wood and iron to look like stone.

The Craftsman philosophy did not give birth to a specific style, but there are a number of characteristics linking houses built in the Craftsman tradition. They tend to be constructed in local materials, structural members such as rafters and beam ends are exposed, and they have little nonstructural ornamentation. The Craftsman building has horizontal proportions, and it attempts to harmonize with nature.

A number of Bay Area architects, including Bernard Maybeck, Julia Morgan, and Willis Polk, developed a regional form of architecture that drew

heavily upon the Craftsman philisophy. These architects were concerned especially with the relationship between architecture and nature. At the time there was a growing interest in the California landscape. In the 1890s, a number of novels were published about frontier life in California, and painters captured the wild and untamed California landscape on canvas. The Sierra Club was founded in 1892. Because of the number of people immigrating to the Bay Area, local residents grew increasingly concerned about the destruction of the natural environment.

The Bay Area Regionalists shared a set of ideas and ideals rather than a uniform expression or style. Maybeck and his colleagues designed rustic houses that harmonized with nature. These combine Craftsman elements with features from Medieval, Swiss, and Japanese architecture. Because of their distance from the architectural mainstream, Bay Area architects had greater freedom to experiment. The result was a synthesis of eclectic forms into rustic homes often covered with natural wooden shingles or boards--often of redwood--blending beautifully with their natural sites. The best example of the Craftsman style in Belmont in its more rustic form, is at 1240 Elmer Street, east of the Old County Road. This was a residential area of Belmont when the home was constructed in 1917, but is now industrially zoned. 1240 Elmer retains to a remarkable degree its integrity of design, materials and setting and could easily have come from one of the plans published by Gustave Stickley in *The Craftsman* magazine. 525 Kingston is a shingled version that appears unchanged from its date of construction in1912.

The Bungalow (1895-1935)

The Craftsman tradition reached the largest number of Californians in the form of the bungalow. Rarely were these houses expensive except in the hands of architects like the brothers Greene, whose Pasadena bungalows, with their finely-made joinery and stained glass, are far more elaborate than the run-of-the-mill bungalow popular across the country. Bungalows were a form of low-cost housing designed to fit the needs and budget of the general public. Books and magazines published bungalow plans, and it was even possible to order bungalow kits of precut lumber, nails, and details from Sears. Around the turn of the century, California saw a population boom. As the population quickly increased, the bungalow met the increased housing needs admirably.

The bungalow originated in India and its name is derived from "banglas" which is Hindustani for "belongingg to Bengal." In Bengal, the British combined a local housing type--a low structure with a veranda--with

the English cottage to create the bungalow. Stickley described the bungalow as "a house reduced to its simplest form" that "never fails to harmonize with its surroundings, because its low broad proportions and absolute lack of ornamentation give it a character so natural and unaffected that it seems to sink into and blend with any lanscape." The bungalow is usally one and one half stories high with an off-center front porch. Everything about the bungalow is horizontal and earth-hugging. The roof is long and wide with a shallow slope and overhanging eaves, the foundation is low, the front porch is wide, and the front window is horizontally proportioned. The porch supports are usually sturdy and stout, and rafters and beams are exposed. The bungalow often is constructed in building materials prevalent in the region. Its wide windows allow a clear view outside, and the porch provides an outdoor living space especially useful in a climate like California's.

A popular subtype, known as the California Bungalow, was constrcuted between 1910 and 1925. The California Bungalow tends to have the familiar low horitontal proportions, front porch, and exposed structural elements, but it is usually faced with stucco, and the porch roof is supported by massive "elephantine" columns (also known as battered columns) which have four faces sloping inward as they rise. In the 1920s, the bungalow's popularity gave way to houses built in a variety of picturesque revival styles. There are sill a few bungalows from the period 1910-1925 remaining in Belmont. Good examples can be found along the 800 and 900 blocks of Waltermire Street.

Spanish Eclectic Revival (1915-1945)

- *low pitched or flat roofs without much eave overhang
- *red tile roofs and tiled parapets
- *multi-level roofs
- *usually faced with stucco, occasionally brick
- *asymmetrical massing
- *arches, pointed, round, or with a slight peak (cf. Islamic arches), triple arched, or parabolic
- *ornamental details derived from Spanish, Byzantine, Gothic, Italian, and Spanish sources
- *spiral columns
- *multi-pane windows
- *window grilles in iron or wood
- *elaborate chimney tops
- *round or square towers
- *decorative iron work
- *ornamentation around doorways

The Spanish Eclectic Revivial style represents another chapter in California's search for a regional architecture appropriate to its climate, topography, and traditions. Many believed that the Mission Revival style, derived as it was from ecclesiastical architecture, was inappropriate to secular buildings. Yet Spanish sources still seemed better than the architecture of the American East Coast. In 1906 Herbert Croly suggested that California architects look directly at Mediterrranean houses, which he characterized as the most "valuable and imitable local domestic style." He believed that Mediterranean houses represented California's true heritage because the Franciscan friars would have built such houses if they had had the knowledge, skills, tools, and materials. Since no such houses were ever constructed in California, Croly actually proposed a form of architectural mythmaking--the recreation of a California past that never really was.

The Spanish Eclectic Revival, also known as the Mediterranean or Spanish Colonial, was popularized by the Panama-California Exposition (which celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal) held in San Diego in 1915. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, who designed the exposition buildings, drew inspiration from the Spanish Colonial architecture found throughout Latin America. More and more architects began to look directly at Spanish architecture as well as style that is an eclectic mix of Spanish, Spanish Colonial, Northern Italian, and North African Islamic elements.

The style was popular mainly in states with a Spanish heritage, but there are examples sprinkled throughout the United States. By the 1920s, according to art historians Gebhard, Winter, and Sandweiss, it was *the* style in coastal California. It not only was a link with California's Spanish past, but it also may have seemed suitable to a climate and landscape similar to that of the Mediterranean. Hollywood stars constrcuted Spanish Colonial mansions, and the style appeared in movie sets. It was used for a considerable range of building types, from railroad stations, public buildings, and theaters, to mansions and cottages.

Grand houses combined stucco walls with convoluted Churrigueresque ornamentaion around doorways, wrought-iron details, decorative tiles, spiral columns, and arches. But developers also used the style extensively for smaller houses. The Spanish Colonial Revival style was particularly popular for buildings of all types in Belmont during the 1920s and 1930s. Good examples abound especially in the Bay View Heights subdivision along the 1300 block of Sunnyslope. 1556 Sixth Avenue is a landmark version of the residential form built in1925 for Mr. Hyne, an executive with the Spring Valley Water Company. The Lariat Tavern at 1426-28 El Camino Real and

the Old City Fire Station at 875 O'Neill Street, both under construction in 1935, exhibit the adaptibility of the style to commerical and public buildings.

Tudor Revival (1900-present)

- **irreguair and asymmetrical in massing**
- **steep roofs, often gabled with cross gables, also hipped**
- **stucco, brick, stone, with some wood**
- **tall chimneys**
- **towers**
- **ornamental half-timbering**
- **tall narrow rectangular windows divided into many panes**

Californians may have felt that the Spanish Colonial Revival style represented their heritage, but they also were open to a variety of other styles popular at the same time. Among these was the Tudor Revival. This actually is a general term under which we loosely group buildings showing the influence of English architecture from the time of Shakespeare and of French architecture from Normandy and Brittany. It also is sometimes called the Provincial Style, since the architectural sources are generally from the provincial countryside rather than the city. During the 'teens and 'twenties in particular, many books and articles appeared showing drawings and photographs or rural English and French houses. These houses are picturesque, informal, and rustic, with steep gables and irregular silhouettes.

The Tudor style was used primarily for homes in the suburbs, which were perceived romantically as pastoral enclaves safely isolated from the bustle of the city. Because the Tudor Revival style was based on rural architecture, it helped to enhance the image of the suburban home as a country retreat. The Tudor style also created a sense of instant heritage. Tudor houses were designed to look as if they had always been there rather than having been recently planted. Attempts were made to make Tudor houses look as it they had weathered the ravages of time. Occasionally a section of stucco will be peeled away to reveal bricks beneath, as if the building had aged over the centuries. An architectural style that recalled the European agrarian past may have provided a sense of comfort and continuity during a period when there were so many technological and social changes.

The Tudor Revival style was especially popular in Belmont during the 'twenties and 'thirties. The Belburn Village subdivision of 1927-28 exhibits the largest concentration of Tudor Revival homes in the community. A number of these one and two story examples along Belburn Drive and Avon

Street were built by contractor John Daly. The landmark example at 1801 Belburn Drive was illustrated in a 1937 Chamber of Commerce promotional brochure as "a typical Belmont residence", "where main street is a wooded lane."

Streamline Moderne (1930-40)

- *simple box-like shapes, often with rounded corners
- *smooth surfaces, often stucco
- *horizontal proportions, emphasized with bands of horizontal and ribbon windows
- *round windows (ship portholes)
- *steel railings
- *horizontal balustrades
- *facade usually asymmetrical and glass bricks

At the height of popularity of the picturesque revival architectural styles in the 1920s, a new movement appeared out of Europe denying entirely the validity of historicism in architecture. Its leaders were Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe, all Europeans with educations in the Beaux Arts building tradition. They looked to the present rather than the past for a model on which to base their new forms. They chose the machine, or more properly, the symbol of the machine to develop in buildings the precision, orderliness and functionalism that made the machine efficient. In fact, the Frenchman, Le Corbusier, had proposed that the modern house should be "a machine for living." By the early 1930s, Le Corbusier's "machine for living" began to take on a streamline appearance approximating advances in industrial technology.

After 1930, the Streamline Morderne style became a predominant modernistic form in the United States. Many streamlined buildings have Art Deco ornamentation, but the architecture of the 1930s, an era of austerity, tends to have a pared-down aesthetic compared with the architecture of the 1920s. Architectural design was influenced by streamlining in industrial design. Ships, airplanes, and automobiles were given smooth, rounded shapes on the theory that streams of air could flow over them without interference as they traveled at high speed. Streamlining was also adapted for household appliances from irons to pencil sharpeners, even though aerodynamics were not an important factor in the function of these objects. Functionally motivated or not, people responded to this machine aesthetic with its connotations of speed and modernity.

Streamline Moderne architecture tends to derive a number of its elements from industrial design. Surfaces are flat and smooth, and corners are often rounded. The horizontal grooves and lines banding the tops of buildings suggest speed, and ribbons of windows emphasize the horizontal proportions. Round windows and steel railings borrowed from ships, are common. Many commercial buildings in the Streamline Moderne style are still in active service, however, good residential examples are hard to find. Belmont has two fine homes in the style at 1441 and 1447 Sixth Avenue. Walter Jacobi and his sons built them both in1939. They came from plans drawn by German architect E. A. Wm. Baumgarten. Both retain much of their design integrity as constructed. Note the portholes in the garage door of 1441 Sixth Avenue.

GLOSSARY

Angled Bay A three-sided bay window with two slanted sides.

Arcaded Wing Wall An arched extension of the front gabled wall extending beyond the main house. Found on houses in both the Spanish Eclectic and Tudor styles.

Balustrade A small post forming part of a row supporting a handrail.

Bargeboard An ornamented, usually flat board placed against the side of a gable to hide the ends of the horizontal roof timbers.

Boxed Cornice A hollow cornice, built up of boards, moldings shingles, etc.

Bracket An angled support or pseudo-support placed under roof eaves and cornices, porch columns, door and window hoods.

Cantalivers Horizontal rows of timbers or metal beams projecting at right angles from the framed wall, for sustaining balconies, bays, etc.

Capital The carved top of a column.

Carrara Glass Together with vitrolite, one of several trade names for pigmented structural glass, an opaque veneer produced in a variety of colors used extensively during the 1930s and 1940s to cover both exterior and interior wall surfaces.

Cartouche An ornamental panel appended to a wall surface usually above window heads or entry ways. Often in the form of a scroll or tablet in relief which has an elaborate border.

Chamfering Cutting the edge of anything originally right angled.

Column A vertical support. The five Classical orders of columns are : Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, and Composite.

Corbel A bracket form, usually produced by extending successive courses of masonry or wood beyond the wall surface.

Cornice A horizontal projecting molding at the top of a building.

Craftsman Windows Large glass panels in doors and windows generally articulated with wooden muntins in rectangular geometric forms.

Dentils A molding of small toothlike squares.

Dormer Window A gabled window projecting from the side of a sloping roof.

Double-hung Sash Window A window with two sashes, one above the other, arranged to slide vertically past each other.

Drop Siding Exterior, horizontal wooden siding rabbited on the lower edge to overlap. Sometimes referred to as shiplap siding.

Eave The bottom edge of a roof.

Elevation A graphic projection at a given scale and upon a vertical plane of the front, rear or side of a building.

Facade The front or face of a building.

Fenestration The arrangement of windows and other openings in a wall, Especially the patterns that such an arrangement defines.

Folly A costly but useless structure built to satisfy the whim of some eccentric.

Frieze A horizontal ornamented band under the cornice of a building or on other parts of a house, such as over a window or running around a tower.

Gable The triangular portion at the end of a building formed by the two sides of a sloping roof. Gables are also formed by other sloping roof areas, such as those over windows.

Gambrel Roof A ridged roof which has two slopes on each side, the lower slope having a steeper pitch.

Half-timbering Generally one inch by six inch wooden boards on a stuccoed wall in a decorative pattern. Copies Medieval Northern European timber framing tradition. Found in the Tudor and French Eclectic Revival styles.

Hip Roof A roof that slopes in on all four sides like a pyramid; it may or may not have a flat top.

Hood A molding projecting over the top of a window or door. A hood may be flat, segmented or triangular.

Lancet Window A sharply pointed Gothic arched opening, particularly associated with church architecture.

Modillions A small bracket or console form used in pairs or a series under wide cornices, usually classical.

Nave The body of a church, reaching from the choir or chancel to the principal door.

Neon Lights Elements of illumination depending upon electrical discharge in tubes of neon gas.

Palladian Window A window with a central arch and rectangular sections on either side; also called a Venetian window.

Parapet A low retaining wall at the edge of a roof, porch or terrace. It may be shaped as in the Mission Revival style.

Patterned Shingles Sawn shingles with their exposed surface, the butt, shaped to create unusual patterns such as fishscales, diamonds, and octagons. Associated with the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles.

Pediment A triangular section of molding above porticoes, windows and doors. Classically a low pitched gable on a columned temple.

Pent Roof A roof of a single sloping plane.

Pilaster A psuedo-column projecting only slightly from the face of a wall.

Port Cochere A shelter for vehicles outside an entrance doorway.

Portico A roofed porch, supported by columns or brackets.

Quoin An ornamental wood or brick block placed in vertical rows generally at the corners of a building; classically a stone corner block used to strengthen the structure of a building.

Return A right angle change of a molding which terminates the moldering's run.

Stucco Plaster for exterior wall

Turned Work Ornamental wood work turned on a lathe, such as spindles and spools. Associated with Queen Anne style.

Vane A blade or banner form pivoted on a tower, steeple, or other high point to indicate the direction of the wind. In Belmont these were popular in the 1920s and 1930s on Spanish and Tudor Revival residences.

Vernacular Indigenous, characteristic of a locality.

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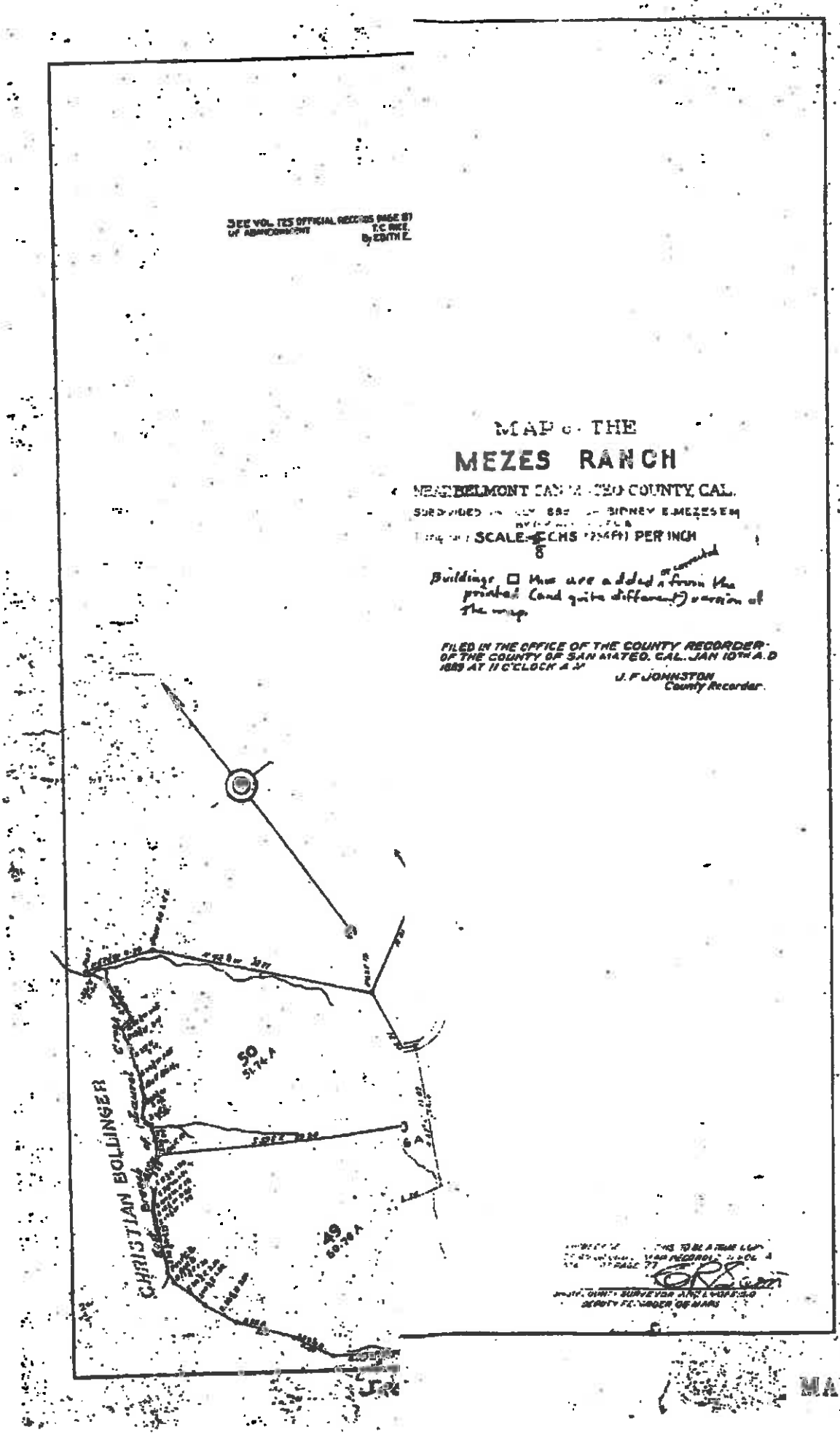
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OF ABANDONMENTS
T.C. IKE.
By EDITH E.
MAP OF THE
MEZES RANCH
NEAR BELMONT SAN MATEO COUNTY, CAL.
SURVEYED IN JULY 1888 FOR SIDNEY E. MEZES Esq
SCALE 6 CHS (396 FT) PER INCH
Buildings ☐ thus are added from the printed (and quite different) version of the map
FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, CAL. JAN 10TH A.D 1889 AT 11 O'CLOCK A.M.
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County Recorder.
CHRISTIAN BOLLINGER
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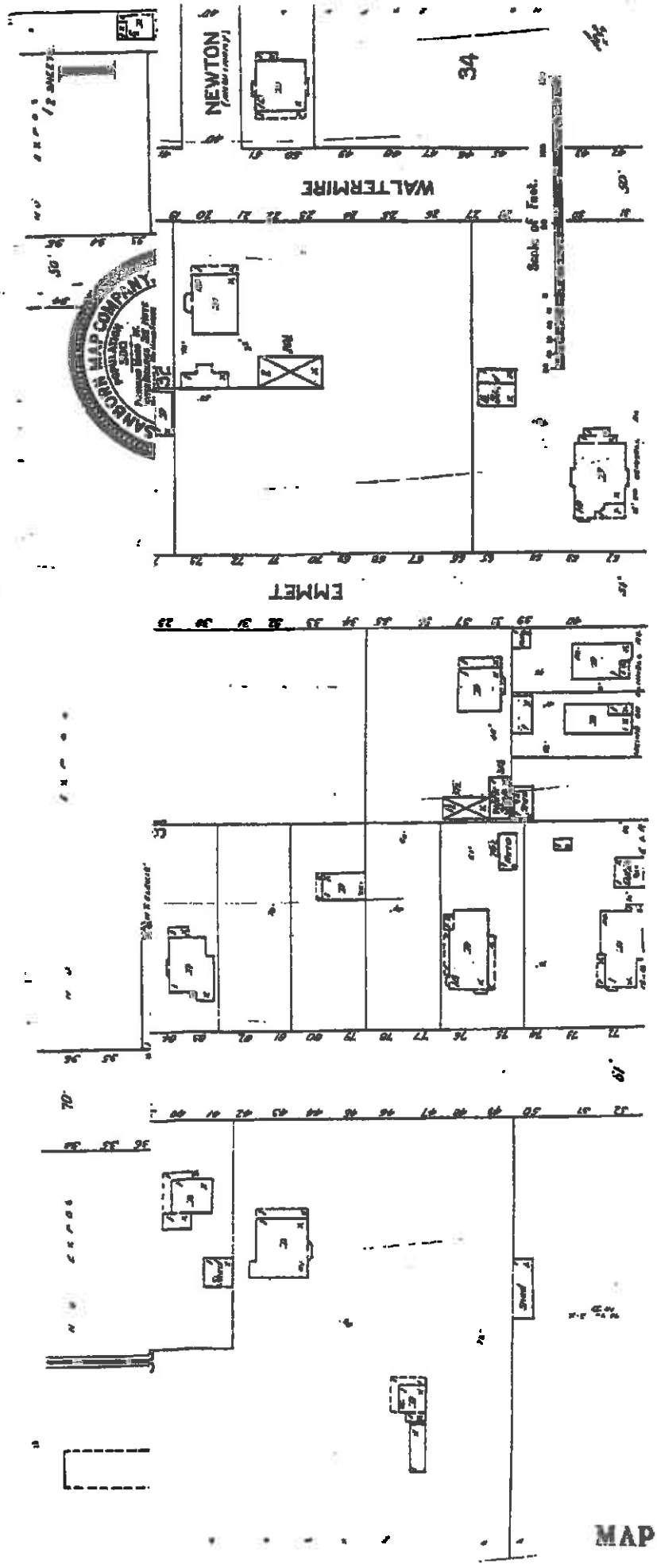
MAP #1



MAP #2

MAP #3
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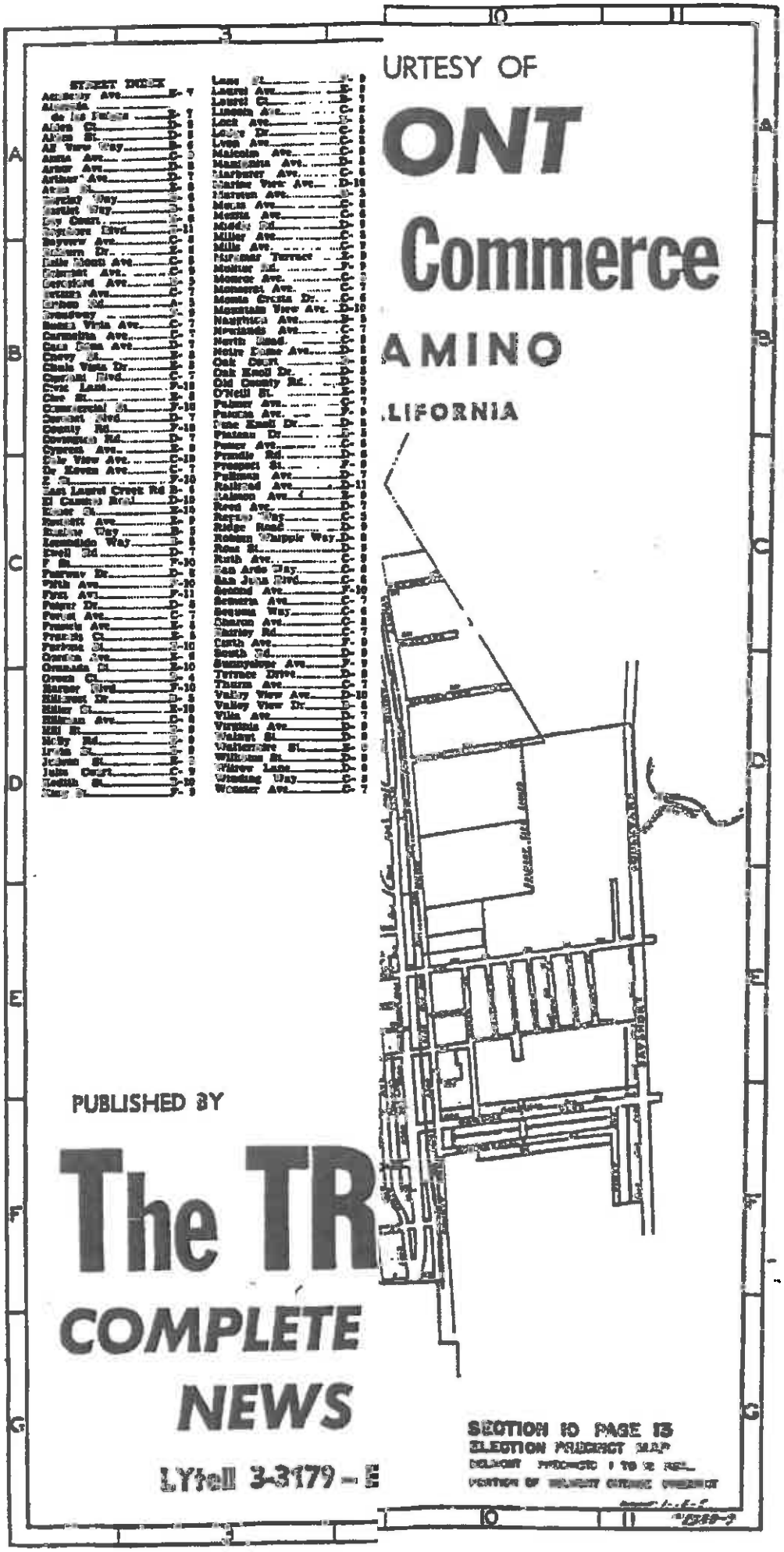
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SECTION 10 PAGE 13
ELECTION PRECINCT MAP

MAP #4

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

*14. Construction date(s) 1903 F Original location Same Date moved

15. Alterations & date Window changes over time - grocery facade stuccoed N/D

16. Architect Builder P. A. Roussel

17. Historic attributes (with number from list) 06 Commercial Building

SIGNIFICANCE AND EVALUATION

18. Context for evaluation: Theme Community Development Area Belmont
Period 1900-1906 Property type General Merchandise Store Context formally developed? Yes

*19. Briefly discuss the property's importance within the context. Use historical and architectural analysis as appropriate. Compare with similar properties. In 1850 the Angelo House was established at the junction of what has become lston Avenue and the Old County Road. This core business of a hostelry and saloon became .ocally known as Angelo's Corners. By 1853 it housed the local post office, and was the .ocation for San Mateo County's first court case in 1856. Adam Castor constructed Belmont's :rst general merchandise store in 1857 at what by then had come to be known as "The Corners." ler time this crossroads became the commercial core of Belmont. In the 30 years between 188 ınd 1910, Walter A. Emmett became Belmont's leading merchant. He purchased a general store a :e northwest side of "The Corners" from Carl F. Janke in 1880 in partnership with Matthew Niell. He bought out O'Niell in 1888 and purchased the Belmont Soda Works in 1892. A year .ater he owned the entire northwest block and constructed a livery stable. Emmett was a long :me Belmont postmaster. In 1903 he hired contractor P. A. Roussel to replace the old rcantile store with a large modern building at a cost of $5,000. Emmett incorporated an existing structure into the north end of the new edifice as a grocery store. By that time th principal businesses at "The Corners" were Emmett's store, the Belmont train station and two tels, Waltermire's Belmont House and the American Hotel. Of these, elements of the America tel and Emmett's store remain. The American Hotel has been so altered that only Emmett's store retains enough integrity of character defining qualities to qualify it as the last cognizable physical reminder of the early commercial development of the city.

20. Sources
Redwood City Democrat, 3/19/03
Belmont City Resolution # 4154, of 7/22/1974
rsonal interview, Doris Vannier, (local historian,) 11/1/90
nborn Maps 1913, 1932

21. Applicable National Register criteria 3 S

22. Other recognition Locally Registered Landmark
State Landmark No. (if applicable)

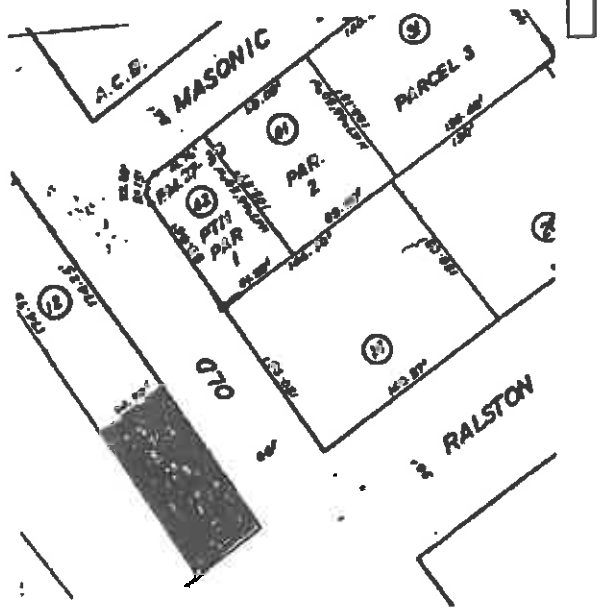
23. Evaluator Kent L. Seavey
Date of evaluation 12/01/90

24. Survey type C

25. Survey name Belmont Historic Resource Inventory

*26. Year form prepared 1990
By (name) Kent L. Seavey
Organization San Mateo County Historical Assoc.
Address 1700 West Hillsdale Blvd.
City & Zip San Mateo, CA 94402
Phone (415) 574-6441

* Sketch map. Show location and boundaries of property in relation to nearby streets, railways, natural landmarks, etc. Name each feature.



State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

1. Historic name: Emmett's Store
*2. Common or current name: Country Store

Ser. No. ____ - ____ - ____
National Register status: ____
Local designation: ____

*3. Number & street: 700 Ralston Avenue Cross-corridor: ____
City: Belmont Vicinity only: ____ Zip: 94002 County: SMA
4. UTM zone: 10 A: 564090/4152690 B: ____ C: ____ D: ____
5. Quad map No.: 4002 Parcel No.: 040-313-090 Other: ____

DESCRIPTION

6. Property category: Building If district, number of documented resources: ____
*7. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the property, including condition, boundaries, related features, surroundings, and (if appropriate) architectural style.

A large one-story wood framed commercial building of two-story equivalent height rectangular in plan resting on a mudsill. The exterior wall cladding is a wide horizontal wood drop siding. A broad simple bracketed frieze surrounds the building envelope at the eaveline. The massive medium hipped roof was originally covered with wood shingle but is now capped by composition roofing. There is a visible rectangle under this material at the south end of the building, the original façade, where a tower element was removed sometime after 1932. This elevation (south) is characterized by paired large fixed plate glass display windows with Luxifor glass above flanking an angled recessed entry two bays wide. Two further plate glass windows flank the old entry with its sidelighted colonial revival oval glass paneled door. Original fenestration included symetrically spaced fixed nine-light windows along the side elevations placed high in the walls. A full bank of matching lower windows now appear along the west (side) elevation with a partial lower bank along the east (side) elevation. Entrance is now effected through the east side. At the rear (north) there is an attached one-story false-fronted wood frame building. It is east facing with a stuccoed façade surmounted by a bracketed cornice. Original to the building, it served as a grocery store. A further side-gabled modern shed addition extends north of this feature. The setting is highly built-up commercial.

94296-0001

8. Planning agency: City Redevelopment Agency

9. Owner & address:
Louis Marcus
1611 Borel Place, #3
San Mateo, CA 94402

10. Type of ownership: Private
11. Present use: Commercial
12. Zoning: C-2
13. Threats: Public Works Project

*Complete these items for historic preservation compliance projects under Section 106 (36 CFR 800). All items must be completed for historical resources survey information.